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VARUṆA AND VIDŪṢAKA
On the origin of the Sanskrit drama

by

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CHAPTER I

VARUṆA: ASURA AND ĀDITYA[1]

1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The place of Varuṇa in the Vedic pantheon is one of the most difficult problems of Rigvedic mythology, "le point névralgique des études védiques" as Renou has rightly characterized it[2]. The fundamental difficulty would seem to be that the modern approach, which tries to give an uncontradictory definition of his character, such as "god of the night-sky", "god of the oath", fails to do justice to the intrinsical double-sidedness of the god. Defining Varuṇa as a numinous god wrongly suggests that a solution has been given while the very search for it has still to begin. The only thing which this formula rightly expresses is the difficulty which the notion of a divine-demoniacal god presents to rational thinking, whereas myth can express the double-sidedness of such a god in its own direct way, which does not dissimulate the logical contradictions involved.

One of the mythological traits in which Varuṇa's ambiguous nature manifests itself is the fact that in the Rigveda he is the Asura *par excellence* (and as such is rightly equated to Ahura Mazdā of the Old Iranian religion) while, at the same time, as the most prominent of the Ādityas, he is one of the Devas. Since it cannot be doubted that the Asuras and Devas represent the two fundamentally contrasting moieties of a dualistic cosmos [3], it is clear that this double-sided character of Varuṇa, his being an Asura as well as a Deva, constitutes one of the basic problems of Vedic mythology. It is curious, therefore, that only a few scholars have recognized this difficulty and taken it seriously. In the first place two men of genius must be mentioned: Abel Bergaigne, who clearly formulated one aspect of the problem but could only explain it as the expression of two different conceptions of the divine which co-existed in the Vedic religion (see p. 45) and, secondly, Peter von Bradke, who pointed out that there are two different conceptions of the Asuras in the Rigvedic material, while rightly rejecting the possibility that the one has developed

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[1] When in references to some Saṁhitās of the Black Yajurveda the numbers for page and line are added, the number of the line indicates the beginning of the passage quoted. In view of the character of this study it has been considered unnecessary to increase the typographical difficulties of this text by maintaining in the transscription of the Yajurvedic texts the distinction between *ardhacandra* and "*anusvāra*", which differs from one text to the other. See, e.g., Macdonell, Vedic Grammar, p. 53, Renou, Grammaire de la langue védique, p. 19.

[2] Renou, Festschrift Lommel, p. 122.

[3] Out of the many publications special mention may be made of G. J. Held, The Mahābhārata, An ethnological Study (Amsterdam, 1935) and F. D. K. Bosch, The Golden Germ, An Introduction to Indian Symbolism (Indo-Iranian Monographs, vol. II), 's-Gravenhage 1960.

from the other. His own conclusions, however, are unacceptable [4]. Further, Eggeling, SBE. 44, p. XX ff., made some interesting observations on the problem. Of the present generation of scholars W. Norman Brown, in one of his earliest papers, was the first to draw attention to the problem [5]. In the German-speaking countries, on the other hand, the discussion of the Asura problem and the relation between Ahura and Daēva in Ancient Iran, has not, from Haug down to Paul Horsch [6] led to notable results. This is mainly due to the fact that the contrast between Devas and Asuras was interpreted in terms of "divine" versus "demoniacal" [7] and that the difficulties inherent in the conception of the Asuras were rather concealed than explained by an evolutionistic approach [8].

2. VARUṆA AS AN ASURA

The Vedic passages where Varuṇa, either alone or conjointly with Mitra, is called *ásura* are not numerous [9]. Sometimes this term occurs in a context where Varuṇa's ominous and inauspicious character is prominent. This is particularly the case in II.28.7 "Strike us not, O Varuṇa, with thy weapons which wound the sinful man, O Asura, while thou art searching for him," I.24.14 "We deprecate thy wrath, O Varuṇa, by our worship, our sacrifices and oblations. Thou, who hast the power, O wise Asura, O king, untie the sins that we have committed" and Ath. S. V.11.1 "How unto the great Asura didst thou speak here? how with shining manliness unto the yellow father? having given, O Varuṇa, a spotted (cow) as sacrificial fee, thou hast with the mind intended re-bestowal" (Whitney) [10]. In the other passages it is rather Varuṇa's all-powerfulness that is stressed; cf. VIII.42.1 "He, the all-knowing Asura, has propped up the sky, he has measured out the extent of the earth . . . All those things are (the effect of) Varuṇa's vows," II.27.10 "Thou, O Varuṇa, art king over all, over the gods,

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[4] See P. v. Bradke, Dyâus Asura, Ahura Mazdâ und die Asuras. Studien und Versuche auf dem Gebiete alt-indogermanischer Religionsgeschichte. Halle, 1885.

[5] W. Norman Brown, "Proselyting the Asuras (A Note on Rig Veda 10,124)", JAOS. 39 (1919), pp. 100–103 (cf. also JIES. 2 [1973]).

[6] Paul Horsch, Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur. Bern, 1966.

[7] Cf., e.g., Hillebrandt, Vedische Mythologie II² (1929), p. 402ff.: "Manen, Dämonen, Asuras".

[8] This is also true of Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 420 n. 1 (see below, p. 32) and of Renou, Études védiques et pāṇinéennes [EVP] 15, p. 171 "Juxtaposition qui tournera vite en une opposition tranchée".

[9] P. von Bradke, op.c., pp. 72, 120, Dandekar, "Asura Varuṇa", Annals Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute XXI (1940), pp. 178–79 (whose characterization of Varuṇa as "Creator and constructor of the Universe", p. 181, needs some specification).

[10] Cf. II.28.7 *má no vadhaír Varuṇa yé ta iṣṭáv énaḥ kṛṇvántam asura bhrīṇánti*, I.24.14 *áva te hélo Varuṇa námobhir áva yajñébhir īmahe havírbhiḥ, kṣáyann asmábhyam asura pracetā rājann énāṁsi śiśrathaḥ kṛtáni*, AS. V.11.1 *kathám mahé ásurāyā 'bravīr ihá kathám pitré háraye tveṣánṛmṇaḥ, pṛśnim Varuṇa dákṣiṇāṁ dadāván punarmaghatvám mánasā 'cikitsīḥ*. For the last hymn see Hillebrandt, Varuṇa und Mitra, pp. 88, 110, von Bradke, op. c., p. 100, Bloomfield, The Atharvaveda, p. 77, Renou, Festgabe f. H. Lommel, p. 126.

O Asura (!), and over the mortals", X.132.4 (cf. II.27.10) "The other one, yonder Heaven, was given birth to, O Asura. Thou, O Varuṇa, art king over all", further V.63.3, where Geldner gives an alternative explanation of *ásurasya māyáyā* as referring to Varuṇa, and Ath. S. IV.15.12 "(. . .) Pouring down waters, our father Asura . . . Let the gurgles of the waters puff, O Varuṇa – let go the waters that hang down (from the sky); let the frogs whose arms are speckled croak among the water courses" [11], Mitra and Varuṇa are addressed by the dual vocative *asurā́* in I.151.4 "That people is foremost that is very dear to you, O Asuras, you announce the high order, you (gods) who are *ṛtávan*", and in VII.36.2 "This newest hymn of praise I make for you, O Asuras, Mitra and Varuṇa" [12].

Particularly interesting are the passages where Mitra and Varuṇa are called *devā́v ásurā* or *devā́nām ásurāḥ*, cf. VIII.25.4 "The two great sovereigns (*samrā́jā*), Mitra and Varuṇa, the gods who are Asuras" [13] and VII.65.2 "They are the two Asuras of the Devas, they are the Aryas" [14]. The exact meaning of this term, which only occurs in the Rigveda, has to my knowledge never been correctly explained. It apparently implies that there are some Devas who are Asuras, in contrast with others, such as Indra, who are not. In a few passages, it is true, Indra is also called an Asura, but it is generally conceded that this is due to a secondary extension [15]. In the family collections Indra is an Asura-killer (VI.22.4 *asurahán*) but never an Asura [16]. In VIII.96.9 he is exhorted to slay the

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[11] VIII.42.1 *ástabhnād dyā́m ásuro viśvávedā, ámimīta varimā́ṇam pṛthivyā́ḥ, . . . víśvét tā́ni Váruṇasya vratā́ni*, II.27.10 *tvā́m víśveṣām Varuṇa 'si rā́jā yé ca devā́ asura yé ca mártāḥ* (cf. Renou, EVP. 7, p. 90), X.132.4 *asā́v anyó asura sū́yata dyaús tvā́m víśveṣām Varuṇā 'si rā́jā*, V.63.3 *samrā́jā ugrā́ vṛṣabhā́ divás pátī pṛthivyā́ Mitrā́váruṇā vicarṣaṇī, citrébhir abhrair úpa tiṣṭhato rávaṁ dyā́ṁ varṣayatho ásurasya māyáyā*, AS. IV.15.12 *apó niṣiñcánn ásuraḥ pitā́ naḥ śvásantu gárgarā apā́ṁ Varuṇa áva nícīr apā́ḥ sṛja vádantu pṛ́śnibāhavo maṇḍū́kā iriṇā́ 'nu* (for *nícīḥ* see India Maior, Congratulatory Volume J. Gonda, p. 152). Cf. also, e.g., MS. I.6.11 (104,2) *Váruno vai devā́nāṁ rā́jā* (see n. 74).

[12] I.151.4 *prá sā́ kṣitir asura yā́ máhi priyā́ ṛtāvānāv ṛtám ā́ ghoṣatho bṛhát*, VII.36.2 *imā́ṁ vām Mitrāvaruṇā suvṛktím iṣaṁ ná kṛṇve asurā návīyaḥ*. Cf. also Bernhard Geiger, Die Aməša Spəntas, p. 222 n. 1.

[13] *mahántā Mitrā́váruṇā samrā́jā devā́v ásurā* "(qui sont à la fois) dieux (et) Asura's," Renou, EVP. 5, p. 91 (cf. 7, p. 68), like Geldner: "die Götter und Asura's sind." What is actually meant is "Asuras who have become Devas", "Devas of Asuric origin". Different is X.82.5 *paró devébhir ásurair yád ásti* "what is beyond Devas *and* Asuras", where two different groups are meant.

[14] *tā́ hí devā́nām ásurā tā́v aryā́* "die sind die Asura unter den göttern, die die freundlichen" (Ludwig, similarly Bergaigne III, p. 87, and Renou). Incorrect von Bradke, op. c., p. 87 and Geldner: "sie sind die beiden Gebieter (Asura), die Herren unter den Göttern", since *all* Ādityas must have been *devā́nām ásurāḥ*. Cf. VIII.27.20, Bergaigne l.c. and, for Varuṇa as king of the gods, n. 296. Different is, of course, AS. I.10.1 *ayā́ṁ devā́nām ásuro ví rājati* "This Asura rules over the gods". See n. 74.

[15] Cf. I.174.1 (an imitation of II.27.10, where Varuṇa is addressed), VIII.90.6 (in a fixed formula, see von Bradke, p. 61) and two passages in the tenth maṇḍala (X.96.11 and 99.12, see von Bradke, p. 73). See also Bergaigne III, pp. 71ff., 80, B. Geiger, Die Aməša Spəntas, p. 205 n. 2, Kuiper, IIJ. 3, p. 187.

[16] Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 427f.

ásurā adevāḥ [17]. If, then, the Rigvedic poets distinguished between two classes of Asuras, the question naturally arises why none of the later texts (except some Atharvavedic passages, cf. p. 41) make this distinction and why they no longer refer to Varuṇa as an Asura.

The contrast between Devas and Asuras, as we find it in the brāhmaṇas, is only one of the forms in which the dualistic world order of upper world and nether world manifests itself. (See, e.g., Hist. of Rel. 15, p. 107 ff.). The same dualism was recognized in the contrast of the first half of the year (*devayāna*) versus the second (*pitṛyāṇa*), of the first half of the month with the waxing moon (*śuklapakṣa*) versus the second with the waning moon (*kṛṣṇapakṣa*), of day versus night (e.g., TS. I.5.9.7), of light versus darkness (e.g., ŚB. II.4.2.2; 5) and, on the social level, of Ārya versus Dāsa (IIJ.12, p. 282). Cf., e.g., "The Śūdra and the Ārya were created, Day and Night were their *adhipatis*" [18]. The fact that the dualism is in this manner only expressed in the brāhmaṇas is generally regarded as a proof of its post-Rigvedic character. It has, however, been objected that the same dualism underlies the whole Rigvedic mythology and clearly stems from the proto-Indo-Iranian religion [19]. The difference which seemingly exists in this respect between the brāhmaṇas and the Rigveda is rather due to the circumstance that the authors of the brāhmaṇas were theologians [20], who handled the mythic tradition in a systematic manner, whereas the poets of the Rigvedic hymns rather presupposed it and, besides, expressed themselves in the traditional poetical terminology.

The traditional theory of a "Verteufelung" of the Asuras in a later stage of development of Vedic mythology [21] is no doubt incorrect. It is due to a failure of former generations to realize the mythological meaning of the strife between the Devas and their elder brothers [22], the Asuras, "both of them sons of Prajāpati" as the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa significantly adds [23]. In the ancient conception of the world the strife between the two parties of gods was necessary for the generation and continuation of life, and for the same reason it was necessary that it ended with the gods subduing their opponents.

This idea, however, is seemingly at variance with another one, quite

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[17] Von Bradke, op. c., p. 86.

[18] *śūdrāryā asṛjyetām, ahorātré ádhipatnī āstām* MS II.8.6. (p. 110, 14), KS. XVII.5 (248,23), KKS. XXVI.4 (107,9/124,19), TS. IV.3.10.2. See also G. J. Held, The Mahābhārata, p. 169 and cf. IIJ. 12, p. 282.

[19] See IIJ. 3, p. 211.

[20] Similarly von Bradke, p. 90.

[21] Thus, e.g., Macdonell, Vedic Mythology p. 156. See above, n. 8 and Renou, EVP. 13, p. 145: "acceptation péjorative d'Asura."

[22] See von Bradke, p. 89, my note in IIJ. 8, p. 106 and cf. Rām. VII.11.14.

[23] *ubháye prājāpatyāḥ* ŚB. I.2.4.8, I.2.5.1, I.5.3.2, I.7.2.22, II.2.2.8, II.4.3.2, III.4.4.3, III.6.1.8, IV.2.2.11, V.1.1.1, IX.2.3.8, IX.5.1.12, XI.1.8.1, XI.5.6.3. See Lévi, La doctrine du sacrifice, p. 44, Minard, Trois Enigmes II, p. 325. For the same reason it can be said (VS. 30.22) *áśūdrā ábrāhmaṇās té prājāpatyāḥ*, for Prajāpati is undefined (ŚB. VI.4.1.6), or he is both defined and undefined (VII.2.4.30), limited and unlimited (VI.8.1.4).

common in the brāhmaṇas, according to which the Devas drove the Asuras away from these worlds [24]. At first sight this might look as though the dualism of the cosmic contest had been replaced by a monism in which the dark, demonic aspects of the world had been pushed away. Such a conclusion, however, would be incorrect. There are certainly, in late

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[24] The Rigveda only refers to the victory of the Devas over the Asuras: X.53.4 *tád adyá vācáḥ prathamám masīya, yéná 'surāṁ abhí devá ásāma*, 157.4 *hatvâya devá ásurān yád âyan*, cf. *asurahán*, epithet of Agni (VII.13.1) and Indra (VI.22.4). Its reticence (except VIII.96.9 *cakréṇa tâṁ ápa vapa*, see von Bradke, p. 86) is noteworthy in view of AS. IV.19.4 *yád adó devá ásurāṁs tváyâ 'gre nirákurvata* "when of yore, in the beginning, the gods drove out the Asuras with thee", IX.2.17 *yéna devá ásurān prâṇudanta, yéné 'ndro dásyūn adhamáṁ támo ninâya*, 18 *(babādhé* for *ninâya)*, X.3.11 *sá me śátrūn ví bādhatām Índro dásyūn ivâ 'surān*, perhaps also VI.7.3 (Paipp. XIX.3.12) *yéna devā ásurāṇām ójāṁsy ávṛṇīdhvam* ("repelled"??). Cf. furtherMS. I.10.5 (145,1) *devâś ca vâ ásurāś cā 'smíṁl lokā āsant. sá Prajâpatir akāmayata: prâ 'surān nudeya . . . só 'surān prâṇudata*, II.5.3 (50,3) *táto devâ ásurān ebhyó lokébhyaḥ prâṇudanta*, II.5.9 (60,8), III.6.6 (66,14) *devâ ásurān hatvaí 'bhyó lokébhyaḥ prâṇudanta*, III.2.1 (14,8) *taír ásurān ebhyó lokébhyo nírabādhanta* (15,8) *taír ásurān ebhyó lokébhyaḥ prâṇudanta*, III.8.1 (92,1) *ásurāṇāṁ vâ eṣú lokéṣu púra āsan . . . tân ebhyó lokébhyaḥ prâṇudanta*, IV.1.10 (13,14) *ásurāṇāṁ vâ iyáṁ pṛthivy áśīt, té devâ abruvan: dattá no 'syâḥ pṛthivyâ íti . . .* (after the four quarters have been assigned to the Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas and Maruts, the text continues, p. 14,1) *táto devâ ásurān ebhyó lokébhyo nírabhajan*; KS. VIII.5 (88,11) *stomapurogā vai devā ebhyo lokebhyo 'surān prāṇudanta* (otherwise MS. I.6.4: 92,3 *ásurān abhyàjayan*), IX.14 (117,2) *pañcahotrā vai devā asurān prāṇudanta*, X.7 (132,15) *táto devâ ásurān ajayaṁs, té 'surâñ jitvâ rákṣāṁsy ápānudanta*, (132,19) *yâny evá purástād rákṣāṁsy âsaṁs, tâni téna prâṇudanta . . . yâny evâbhíta âsaṁs, tâni téna vyàbādhanta*, XIII.3 (181,14), XXV.2 (104,13) *Viṣṇur (vā) imāṁl lokān udajayat, sa ebhyo lokebhyo 'surān prāṇudata*, XXI.4 (41,20) *prāñgacitā vai devā asurān prāṇudanta*, XXVI.1 (121,10) *prācībhir vā āhutibhir devā anyān asurān prāṇudanta*, XXXII.5 (23.9) *Viṣṇumukhā vai devāś chandobhir ebhyo lokebhyo 'surān prāṇudanta* (cf. TS. I.7.5.4), XXXV.20 (66,12) *sá [Prajâpatiḥ] cāturmāsyaír evâ 'surān prâṇudata* (67,2) *Índro Vṛtrám ahan, vaiśvadevéna vai só 'surān prâṇudata*, XXXVII.12 (93,6) *tenai 'nān prāṇudanta*; TS. II.6.1.3 *té devâḥ prayājair ebhyó lokébhyó 'surān prâṇudanta*, VI.2.3.2 *tâṁ Rudró 'vāsṛjat, sá tisráḥ púro bhittvaí 'bhyó lokébhyó 'surān prâṇudata*, VI.3.1.4, 4.10.3–4 *yé purástād ásurā âsan, tâṁs tâbhiḥ prâṇudanta, yâḥ pratîcīr yé paścâd ásurā âsan, tâṁs tâbhir ápānudanta*; AB. I.23.2 *te [devāḥ] yām eva prathamām upasadam upāyaṁs, tayai 'vainān asmāl lokād anudanta, yāṁ dvitīyām . . .*, II.11.1 *te [devāḥ] 'gninaiva purastād asurarakṣāṁsy apāghnatā 'gninā paścāt*, V.11.1 *te vai devāḥ ṣaṣṭhenaivā 'hnai 'bhyo lokebhyo 'surān prāṇudanta*, VI.14.9–10 *(nirjaghnuḥ, prajigāya)*; KB. VIII.8 [= 9.10] *etena vai devāḥ pañcadaśena vajreṇai 'bhyo lokebhyo 'surān anudanta*, XII.3.9 *etena vai devās triḥsamṛddhena vajreṇai 'bhyo lokebhyo 'surān anudanta*; PB. VIII.9.1 *asurā vā eṣu lokeṣv āsaṁs, tān devā hariśriyam ity asmāl l. prāṇudanta* (etc.), IX.2.11 *asurā vā eṣu lokeṣv āsaṁs, tān devā ūrdhvasadmanenai 'bhyo lokebhyaḥ prāṇudanta*; GB. II.2.7 *ta ebhyo lokebhyo niraghnan, ekayā 'muṣmāl lokād, ekayā 'ntarikṣād, ekayā pṛthivyāḥ*; ŚB. IX.2.3.8 *devâś cá 'surâś co 'bháye prājāpatyâ dikṣv àspardhanta, té devâ ásurāṇāṁ díśo 'vṛñjata*, XIII.8.1.5 *té devâ sapátnān bhrâtṛvyān digbhyò 'nudanta, tè 'dikkāḥ párābhavan*, XIII.8.2.1 *devâś câsurâś co 'bháye prājāpatyâ asmíṁl lokè 'spardhanta, té devâ ásurān sapátnān bhrâtṛvyān asmâl lokâd anudanta*, etc. — These passages are important in more than one respect. KS. XXIII.8 (83,10), XXVIII.2 (154,1), 3 (156,9) *devā vā asurān hatvā vairadeyād īṣamāṇāḥ . . .* and similar passages point to the conclusion that

Vedic texts, traces of a tendency to deny the reality of the cosmic contest (see p. 40) but here we are obviously dealing with a completely different mythological notion. A brief sketch of the Vedic cosmogonical myth may be helpful to explain this [25].

3. COSMOGONY AND ASURAS

According to the cosmogonical myth, as it can be reconstructed from the scattered indications in the Vedic texts, this world arose in two successive phases. In the first, the primordial hill rose from the bottom of the primeval waters and drifted about on their surface. It contained, as a potentiality, life and light and all the goods of human existence, but a strong force of resistance (*vṛtrá*), impersonated by a serpent, prevented them from spreading into the world of darkness outside the hill. The Asuras were the gods of this *rudis indigestaque moles*, this world of undifferentiated unity. The second phase is initiated by the sudden emergence of Indra as the protagonist of the Devas. Indra, who apparently comes from the darkness outside the hill but whose origin is unknown (apart from some references to his mother), throws his *vájra* at the floating hill, which thereby becomes fixed and, at the same time, is split open. He pushes heaven and earth asunder (which symbolizes the creation of the dual cosmos) and the cosmic tree rises from the hill, as the central pillar of the universe, to support the sky. Only at this moment (later re-enacted in Indra's banner festival) the god and the world pillar are identical. As for the opening of the hill, however, this meant conquering

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mythologically there was little or no difference between driving away and killing the Asuras. The difficulty which the driving away presented to rational thought is openly stated in ŚB. IX.2.3.2–4, which first relates how Indra and Bṛhaspati, before the sacrifice, drove the Asuras away in the south but then goes on to say: "Now what the gods did then, that is done on this occasion. Those fiends, it is true, have now been chased away by the gods themselves, but when he does this, he does so thinking, 'I will do what the gods did;' and having had the Asuras, the mischievous fiends, chased away in the south by Indra and Bṛhaspati, he performs this sacrifice in a place free from danger and devilry" (transl. Eggeling). The sacrificial act thus repeats the primordial events. The question then arises whether the place to which the Asuras had been relegated, although different from *imé lokáḥ*, still formed part of the universe. According to the brāhmaṇas it was outside the *traílokya*, that is, heaven, atmosphere and earth (AB. I.23.2, GB. II.2.7), but according to the epic the Asuras were in Varuṇa's underworld (see p. 81, RS. X.82.5 and History of Religions 15, p. 115). The construction of the theatre, however, which represents the sacred world as protected against the evil influences from outside, shows that the Asuras (Daityas, Dānavas) were considered to be outside the cosmos, in contrast with the *nāgas* and other inhabitants of the *pātāla* or *rasātala* (Bhāratīya Nāṭyaśāstra 1.95, 3.62), which protect the dramatic performance "from below" *(adhastād raṅgapīṭhasya)* and reside in the lowest joint of the *jarjara* (IIJ. 16, p. 252 and see below). In view of the relationship between Nāgas and Asuras (see p. 88), this functional contrast should be noted. No weight should be laid on the commentary which paraphrases Kād. 227 line 2 *asura* by *pātālavāsi-devānām*.

[25] The Indian creation myth is treated in greater detail in History of Religions 10 (1971), pp. 91–110 (only this part !) and 15 (1975), pp. 107–120.

the power of resistance of the realm of the Asuras, that is, subduing the Asuras themselves.

It has been argued elsewhere [26] that this cosmogonical fight had to be repeated annually, at the beginning of the new year, in order to renew life and society, and that the Rigveda in its essence is a collection of hymns of the New Year festival. The obvious implication is that Indra was a seasonal god [27]. Much more important, however, is the question which has never explicitly been posed so far, as to what became of the Asuras. In the next section it will be shown that some of them went over to the party of their opponents and thus became *devā́ ásurāḥ*. The reason why this term is no longer used in the post-Rigvedic literature will become clear when the problem of the Ādityas is discussed. Whether intentionally or not, their origin is no longer mentioned, once they have been incorporated in the Devas and have become part of the dual cosmos. It will be shown that although their original name of Asura is no longer used, they actually retain an ambiguous character up to the period of the epics (and later). As for the rest of the Asuras, who are sometimes called *ásurā adevā́ḥ* in the hymns [28], they are chased away from this world as a result of Indra's victory. Since, however, Indra and the Devas have to fight them at the beginning of every new year they must apparently return into this world during the period of crisis which precedes the new strife. For a short period, therefore, the banished demons again become seasonal anti-gods. In later sections we shall have to return to these Asuras. In the present context it is sufficient to remark that their so-called "Verteufelung" is consequently not the result of a historical development of the Vedic religion but is part of the cosmogonical myth. Here again, Bergaigne has made some interesting remarks on the problem (vol. III, p. 115), although he has not recognized the seasonal character of "les démons . . . vaincus, frappés, foudroyés, déchiquetés par leurs adversaires". Therefore, the question remains to be answered what exactly is the position of the *devā́ ásurāḥ* during the same period. It has been suggested that in the period for which most of the Rigvedic hymns were apparently composed, Varuṇa was particularly dreaded because the inauspicious side of his character was prominent [29]. At this point it will suffice to point to this problem (see below, pp. 24, 42).

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[26] See "The Ancient Aryan Verbal Contest", IIJ. 4, pp. 217–281.

[27] Cf. Kālikāpurāṇa 90.52ff. (J. J. Meyer, Trilogie altindischer Mächte und Feste der Vegetation III, p. 113). The much discussed line (RS. II.12.5) "of whom some say 'he is not here *(eṣá)*' " may refer to his supposed absence. It would seem entirely out of the question that the poet here refers to "atheists" *(nāstika)*, as is still the current opinion. See further p. 25 and n. 135.

[28] See von Bradke, p. 105.

[29] See, e.g., S. Lévi, Doctrine du sacrifice, p. 167f., Bergaigne, Rel. Véd. III, pp. 142, 157, Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 33, Lommel, Symbolon 4, p. 158ff., Renou, Festschrift Lommel p. 125, Kuiper, IIJ. 5, pp. 53, 55; 8, p. 109 n. 68. According to Renou there is a "durcissement du personnage" in the Atharvaveda, but in view of the reticence of the Rigveda regarding Varuṇa a different explanation is possible. In this connection attention may be drawn to Hillebrandt's words (II²,

As for the fact that the fight between gods and Asuras is constantly referred to in the brāhmaṇas but only seldom in the Rigveda, this is primarily a matter of difference of style. The authors of the brāhmaṇas, in order to explain the aim and effectiveness of a certain rite, had to recur to the beginning of the world, that is, the cosmogony, which was a guarantee for the efficacy of the ritual. For this purpose they used the fixed formula (the exact wording of which differs from school to school): "The Devas and the Asuras were at strife". When, on the other hand, the Vedic poets relate, over and over again, how Indra slew the serpent, they refer to the same cosmogonical fight in a stylistically different form. Mythologically, this is equivalent to the formula of the theologians.

To conclude this section a few words may be devoted to the relation between the Asuras and Death. In the brāhmaṇas Varuṇa is sometimes identified with *pāpmán* [30] and *mṛtyú* "death" (see p. 72). This shows that, as a result of Varuṇa's incorporation in the pantheon of the Devas, also Death and the ominous powers have been integrated with the cosmic order. In the same way the Rigvedic poet addresses the dead in the words "Thou shalt see the two kings, revelling each in his own wise, Yama and the *deva* Varuṇa" [31]. While in later times a distinction was made between the world of Yama and that of Varuṇa (see p. 74), the Rigvedic poet here regards Varuṇa as the god of the world of the dead. The latter continue to belong to the organized cosmos: "Les Pères sont des morts, mais des morts demeurés mortels; ils n'ont pas rejeté le mal" [32]. They are in the charge of the *devā́ ásurāḥ*. This explains the difference with TS. II.4.1.1, a passage more than once quoted in the handbooks [33]. Here three contrasting pairs are enumerated, viz.

devā́ḥ	:	*ásurāḥ*
manuṣyā̀ḥ	:	*rákṣāṁsi*
pitáraḥ	:	*piśācā́ḥ*

Undue prominence is usually given to the horizontal pairs. The real importance of this passage is, however, in the vertical groups, and particularly in the fact that the dead (*pitáraḥ*) are here classed together with the Devas and men. This is apparent from KS. X.7 (132,10) and JB. I.154 (line 10), where the *pitáraḥ* and the *manuṣyā̀ḥ* have changed places and the former, accordingly, are opposed to the *rákṣāṁsi*. Although this order also occurs in TS. VI.1.1.1 in the tetrad *devā́ḥ* – *pitáraḥ* – *manuṣyā̀ḥ* – *rudrā́ḥ* [34], the common order (corresponding to heaven –

p. 34): "*Keine Erklärung Varuṇa's darf als ausreichend angesehen werden, welche nicht dem ṚV., dem Ritual oder dem klassischen Sanskrit gerecht wird und nicht die Vermittlung zwischen den drei Auffassungen gewährt...*" Only his character of a god of the subterranean world can account for the different aspects, cf. IIJ. 8, p. 115, Hist. of Rel. 15, pp. 114f., 116.

[30] Cf. Pāli *Māro pāpimā*.

[31] *ubhā́ rā́jānā svadhā́yā mádantā Yamám paśyāsi Váruṇaṁ ca devám*. Cf. IIJ. 8, p. 109.

[32] Lévi, Doctrine du sacrifice, p. 98.

[33] E.g., Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, p. 164, Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², pp. 405, 421 (cf. Delbrück, Altindische Syntax, p. 215).

[34] Arbman, Rudra, p. 154 n. 2.

earth – nether world) must have been *devāḥ – manuṣyāḥ – pitáraḥ*, which also occurs, e.g., in ŚB. III.6.2.26 and which is sometimes abridged to *devamanuṣyāḥ*, a term which then also includes the *pitáraḥ* [35]. The Asuras mentioned in this passage are real demons, who stand outside the cosmic order. Logic would demand that Varuṇa, the former Asura who had become a Deva, is their adversary. It is the object of this study to show that this is only part of the truth and that in fact Varuṇa is, even in his relation to his banished brothers, basically ambiguous.

4. VARUṆA AND THE FATHER ASURA

Varuṇa's fundamental ambiguity is particularly apparent in his relation to the "Father Asura" in the cosmogony. The critical point in this relation is the moment when Indra, by breaking the "obstruction" of the undifferentiated primeval world, makes the dual cosmos arise. As we have seen, this act was not so much a real creation as rather a transformation of the primordial Chaos into an organized world. It did not put an end to the existence of the Asuras. A re-grouping takes place. While the majority of the Asuras are chased away from this world and, according to later texts such as the Mahābhārata, continue to live "under the earth" or in the nether world (see p. 88), some become Devas and are *yajñíya* "worthy of sacrifice" and *yajatá* "worthy of worship" (although it is not certain whether *all* Devas were necessarily *yajñíya*, see n. 36). The most prominent among them (apart from Agni and Soma) are Mitra and Varuṇa, the *devāv ásurā* (VIII.25.4). It is of fundamental importance, therefore, to make a clear distinction between, on the hand, the undivided group of Asuras as gods of the undifferentiated primordial world – seldom referred to, it is true, in our texts – and, on the other hand, the later two groups of Asuras, some of whom belonged to the ordered cosmos, while the others subsisted outside it, on the fringes of the "formed" world.

The main points of Vedic cosmogony can be summarized in the three stages I. waters II *ásat* III the duality of *sát* and *ásat*. Apart from the famous *nāsadasīya*-hymn (RS.X.129) the Rigveda has very little to say about stage I but the more so about the primordial hill, which arose from the waters and symbolized the undifferentiated world of *ásat* against which Indra directed his attacks (Vṛtra-slaying). The theological speculations of the Veda centre round this undifferentiated character of *ásat*, in the Brāhmaṇas often impersonated by Prajāpati who is prior to the dual world of *sát* (III) but continues to exist in it as the representative of its totality (see below). The world of *ásat*, which may be roughly named chaos after its Greek homologue, is said to have been "one", "without

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[35] Delbrück, Altindische Syntax, p. 57. It is true that at ŚB. II.1.3.1 the Devas are opposed to the Pitaras, but cf. XIII.8.1.6 "He thus gives him [viz. the deceased] a share of the world of men". Is the different order in the Black Yajurveda due to a tendency to bring the dead in closer contact with the gods? See about this tendency Caland, "Een indogermaansch lustratiegebruik", Meded. Kon. Akad. Wet., Afd. Letterk. 1898, pp. 279–80.

a second", "unformed", "undifferentiated (undiscriminated)", "unmeasured or immeasurable (limitless)" and "not defined (by a name)", which according to L. Renou and L. Silburn, Sarūpa-Bhāratī 1954, p. 68ff. is equivalent to "unshaped, unbounded, unorganized". A few illustrative passages may be quoted: "That breathed according to its nature, although there was no wind. (It was) one, there was not further any other thing whatsoever", "*Asat*, verily, was this in the beginning", "In the beginning there was nothing here, neither heaven nor earth or atmosphere. This, being *ásat*, thought: May I be", "Prajāpati, verily was alone this (world): there was neither day nor night", "Prajāpati was alone this (world). Vāc was his only (possession). Vāc was his second", "Asat was this in the beginning, one without a second", "Unformed, verily, was this", "It was neither day nor night, (it was) undifferentiated". The rise of the cosmos from the primordial world is sometimes described in the abstract terms of the theologians as a birth, as in "*Sát* was born from *ásat* in the first period of the Devas", or as an emanation, e.g. "Prajāpati, verily, was alone this (world). Only Vāc was his own (possession). Vāc was his second. He thought: This Vāc I will emit (*visṛjā iti*)". Cf. "The Devas are on this side (that is, also a product) of the emanation of this (world)"; or, finally, as a multiplication, e.g. "This, which was one, has developed to all (that exists)", "Prajāpati is manifoldly born", etc. [36].

After this digression we can return to the problem of the Asuras who partly belong to the dual world of the cosmos, partly seem to have been relegated to a non-defined world beyond the pale (Hist. of Rel. 15, p. 112). Two restrictions must, however, be made. First, the terminological distinction is only relevant for the Rigveda, since in later texts the term *devā́ ásurāḥ* does no longer occur. The first group is then only denoted

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[36] See, e.g., von Bradke, pp. 59, 104ff. (where the relation between the *Devá ásurāḥ* and the *Ásurā adevā́ḥ* is discussed), RS. X.124.3, which stresses the transition from *ayajñiyá* to *yajñíya*, and, on the other hand, X.19.7 *yé devā́ḥ ké ca yajñíyās té rayyā́ sám sṛjantu naḥ*, which seems to imply the existence of Devas who are not *yajñíya*. Note in this connection that *devá ásura* is also used with reference to Rudra, cf. V.42.11 *námobhir devám ásuraṁ duvasya*. The passage might be of importance for determining the place of Rudra in the Vedic pantheon. — The passages quoted are the following: RS. X.129.2 *ánīd avātáṁ svadháyā tád ékaṁ tásmād dhā 'nyán ná paráḥ kíṁ caná 'sa*, ŚB. VI.1.1.1 *ásad vā́ idám ágra āsīt*, TB. II.2.9.1 *idáṁ vā́ ágre naívá kíṁ caná 'sīt. ná dyaúr āsīt, ná pṛthivī́, nā́ 'ntárikṣam. tád ásad evá sán máno 'kuruta: syā́m íti*, PB. XVI.1.1 *Prajāpatir vā idam eka āsīn, nā 'har āsīn na rātrir āsīt*, XX.14.2 *Prajāpatir vā idam eka āsīt, tasya Vāg eva svam āsīt, Vāg dvitīyā* (otherwise KS. XII.2: 167,15), ChU. VI.2.1 *asad eve 'dam agra āsīd ekam evā 'dvitīyam. tasmād asataḥ sad ajāyata*, MS. III.7.1 (75,1) *ákḷptaṁ vā́ idám ásīt* (cf. TS. VI.1.5.3 *kḷ'ptyāi* "for bringing into harmony" and the fixed phrase *(ékaṁ sántam) bahudhā́ kalpayati*, RS. VIII.58.1, X.114.5, cf. I.164.46 *vadanti*, AB. III.4.9 *viharanti*), TS. V.3.4.7, VI.4.8.3 *ná vā́ idáṁ divā́ ná náktam āsīd, ávyāvṛttam* (cf. *vyāvartayati* "to distinguish, separate", ŚB. II.3.1.17, III.9.3.33, TB. I.1.8.1, etc.), RS. X.72.2 *devā́nām pūrvyé yugé 'sataḥ sád ajāyata*, X.129.6 *arvā́g devā́ asyá visárjanena*, cf. 6 *iyáṁ visṛṣṭíḥ*, VIII.58.2 *ekám vā́ idáṁ ví babhūva sárvam*, AS. X.8.13 *Prajā́patir bahudhā́ ví jāyate* and the well-known formulaic phrase *Prajāpatir akāmayata: prajāyeya, bhūyān syām iti* (Deussen, Allg. Gesch. d. Phil. I.1, p. 181ff.), e.g., PB. VI.1.1 *Prajāpatir akāmayata: bahu syā́m, prajāyeye 'ti*. For *ásat* see also n. 121.

by the specific name Ādityas, whereas the name Asuras is exclusively used with reference to the Asuras who have become demons. Secondly, it seems that the distinction is no longer made during the period of crisis which preceded the new year. As will be shown below, there are reasons to suppose that in those days there was a regression to the situation before the "second creation", in which case all Asuras must again have formed one group against the Devas. With these restrictions the use of the term *ásurā adevā́ḥ* to denote all Asuras who are opposed to the Devas (von Bradke, p. 105) can be accepted, although it occurs only once in RS. VIII.96.9 *anāyudhā́so ásurā adevā́s cakréṇa tā́ṁ ápa vapa ṛjīṣin* "the Asuras that have not become Devas are without weapons, disperse them, O *ṛjīṣin*, with thy disk".

In this connection a passage in RS. X.124 is of particular importance. It has been called a difficult hymn [37], but its difficulty is mainly due to the fact that earlier scholars failed to recognize its place in Vedic cosmogony. This is particularly true of Geldner's interpretation (Übersetzung III, p. 353). He explained it as a finding again of Agni, which is a late reflex of some misconceptions of the nineteenth century. Even in the most recent discussion by Horsch the hymn is, in spite of some correct observations, finally placed in a wrong context.

The passage referred to above is found in the stanzas 4 and 5:

4. *bahvíḥ sámā akaram antár asminn Índraṁ vṛṇānáḥ pitáraṁ jahāmi,*
   Agníḥ Sómo Váruṇas té cyavante paryā́vard rāṣṭráṁ tád avāmy āyán.

[37] Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 61 "In diesem schwierigen Liede", Paul Horsch, Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur (1966), p. 239 with note 3: "Dem schwierigen Liede 10,124 liegt gerade der Übergang der Weltherrschaft von den Asuras unter Varuṇa zu den Devas unter Indra zugrunde, wobei jedoch charakteristischerweise eine Versöhnung zwischen Varuṇa und Indra stattfindet: Varuṇa tritt damit zu den Devas über." In spite of this correct remark Horsch's total conception of this hymn is, I am afraid, beside the mark. Of the secondary literature on this hymn the following may be mentioned in chronological order; 1877: A. Hillebrandt, Varuṇa und Mitra, p. 107f.; 1882: A. Bergaigne, Religion védique III, pp. 129, 145ff. (on Varuṇa: Vṛtra!); 1885: P. von Bradke, Dyâus Asura, p. 97ff.; 1885: H. Oldenberg, ZDMG. 39, p. 68ff. [= Kleine Schriften, p. 490ff.]; 1890–1897: H. S. Vodskov, Sjæledyrkelse og Naturdyrkelse (I, Rig-Veda og Edda], p. 210ff. ("en forholdsvis mærkelig god oversættelse af den så mishandlede RV. X.124," S. Sørensen, Norsk Tidskrift for Filologi 3R VI, 1897–98, p. 137 n. 2); 1893: E. Hardy, Die Vedisch-brahmanische Periode der Religion des alten Indiens, p. 59; 1897: Geldner, Vedische Studien II, p. 292ff. (translation of the hymn on p. 295f.); 1908: Leopold von Schroeder, Mysterium und Mimus im Rigveda, p. 196ff.; 1912: Oldenberg, Ṛgveda, textkritische und exegetische Noten II, pp. 342–44; 1913: A. Hillebrandt, Lieder des Ṛgveda, p. 21ff. *(devayāna* taking the place of *pitṛyāna);* 1920: J. Charpentier, Die Suparṇasage, p. 118; 1923: Oldenberg, Die Religion des Veda³⁻⁴, pp. 94 n. 2, 162ff.; 1929: A. Hillebrandt, Vedische Mythologie II², p. 61ff.; 1951: Geldner, Übersetzung III, p. 352ff. (like Geldner 1897: Agni's flight; see also Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², pp. 62, 211); 1965: L. Renou, EVP. 14, p. 29 (translation), p. 97 (notes); 1966: P. Horsch, Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur, p. 239, and the references given in IIJ. 5 (1961), p. 53, Etudes Asiatiques 25 (1971), pp. 87, 97. The following publications were inaccessible to me: Perry, JAOS. XI, p. 159f., T. Segerstedt, RHR. 57, p. 174f. (quoted by Oldenberg) and S. Sørensen, "Til spørgsmålet om Aditya'erne," Festskrift til Vilhelm Thomsen (1894), p. 335.

5. *nírmāyā u tyé ásurā abhūvan tvám ca mā Varuṇa kāmáyāse,*
ṛténa rājann ánṛtaṁ viviñcán máma rāṣṭrásyā 'dhipatyam éhi.

(4) [Agni:] "Many years have I passed within him; I now leave the father and choose Indra. Agni, Soma and Varuṇa (now) secede. The sovereignty has now turned: I accede to that one and support it". (5) [Indra:] "The Asuras have just lost their magic power (*māyā*). If thou, O Varuṇa, lovest me, assume, O king, the *ádhipatya* of my empire, dividing *ṛtá* from what is against the *ṛtá*".

The first stanza is entirely clear except *akaram*, whose exact meaning is obscure [38]. There are, however, three expressions which call for some comment, viz. *antár asmin*, *índraṁ vṛṇānáḥ* and *pitáraṁ jahāmi*.

4a. *antár asmin*.

As has been noted long ago [39], in the Rigveda *antár* is still an adverb. When followed or preceded by a locative it means, accordingly, "within" (Dutch *binnen in*). Its function of stressing the meaning of the locative is apparent in, e.g., MS. II.4.3 (40,19) *ásti vā idáṁ tyásminn antár vīryàm* versus TS. II.4.12. 4–5 *ásti vā idám, máyi vīryàm*, KS. XII.3 (164,18) *vīryaṁ vā idaṁ mayy asti* "there is, indeed, this strength in me". Grassmann's assumption of a special meaning "in seiner Gemeinschaft" for this passage and for VII.86.2 [40] has rightly been rejected by Geldner, Übersetzung III, p. 353. It is due to an insufficient insight into the mythological implications of the context.

Since the primordial world was undifferentiated, its most prominent feature was the absence of all contrasts which characterize the phenomenal dual world. Thus it lacked, for instance, one of the basic contrasts, that of male versus female. As a consequence the poets, when referring to the "first creation", were compelled to have recourse to paradoxes as a means of expressing what cannot be expressed. Hence it is that they speak alternately of a female being, a primeval Mother, of the womb of a male being, of a bisexual bull, a cow which is at the same time a bull. Cf., e.g., III.29.14 "Day after day, the joyous one (Agni) does not close his eyes,

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[38] *akaram*: for the function of the aorist see K. Hoffmann, Injunktiv, p. 157. The meaning "durchmachen, zubringen", conjectured by Grassmann, is uncertain. It has only been recorded from Mhbh. XV.1.6 crit. ed. (PW. II, col. 83) but from RS. I.33.15c *jyók cid átra tasthivā́ṁso akran* "Schon lange hatten sie hier verweilend gesäumt" (Geldner) it may be inferred that in Vedic idiomatic usage *kṛ-*, when used with a word for a certain span of time, had actually that meaning. For this passage only earlier translators followed Grassmann: Hillebrandt, Lieder, p. 21 and Hardy, p. 59 ("viele Jahre verbrachte ich bei ihm"), W. Norman Brown, JAOS. 39 (1919), p. 102 ("Many years have I passed within him"). Geldner's translation "Viele Jahre war ich in ihm tätig" clearly presents difficulties. Hence Renou: "Durant de nombreuses années j'ai travaillé chez lui", K. Hoffmann "viele Jahre habe ich (bis jetzt) bei ihm gewirkt," which does not, however, solve the problem.

[39] See Roth, PW. I, col. 239, Delbrück, Altindische Syntax, p. 446.

[40] Accepted by Delbrück, Altind. Syntax, p. 446 (cf. also his earlier work Ablativ, Localis, Instrumentalis, 1867, p. 48), and more recently by Hoffmann and Renou in their translations (see n. 38).

ever since he was born from the womb of the Asura" [41].

This primeval world can also be represented by the specific power of obstruction (*vṛtrá*) which is peculiar to it. Cf., e.g., I.54.10 [42] "There was the darkness of the waters, which made their foundation (?) vacillate; the mountain was in the womb of the *vṛtrá*" [43], that is, the primordial hill was present as a potentiality in the womb of Chaos. Whether or not the poet here refers to an abstract obstruction or, more likely, to the serpent as its personification, is not relevant. The Chaos consisted of the primeval waters (*ápaḥ*, *dánu*), whose child was the serpent (*dānavá*). Since in the "first creation" the primordial hill (*párvata*) rose from the bottom of these waters, it must have been present there. After the hill had risen above the surface of these waters, the power of "resistance" was concentrated in it, rather than in the waters. This explains why Indra's attacks are as much directed against the hill as against the serpent [44].

Parallel to these Rigvedic passages, where the poets refer to the womb of the Asura or Vṛtra, there are several passages in the brāhmaṇas where, in the more direct diction of their authors, the phrase "within Vṛtra" is used. Geldner (l.c.) rightly points to TS. II.5.2.3, which relates that Agni and Soma were still in Vṛtra at the moment Indra was going to strike and that they said to him "Strike not, we are within" (*má prá hār, āvám antáḥ svaḥ*). Parallel passages [45] are KB.[2] III.7.17ff. [46] "As for his offering to Agni and Soma at the Full Moon sacrifice: Agni and Soma were within Vṛtra; against them Indra could not throw his *vajra*. For them he instituted this share [a cake] at the Full Moon sacrifice" [47], ibid. XV.3.5 (=KB.[1] XV.2) "Agni and Soma were within Vṛtra: against them Indra could not throw his *vajra*. They came outside to this share

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[41] *ná ní miṣati suráṇo divé-dive yád ásurasya jaṭhárād ájāyata*. On the "Father Asura" (whose place was to be taken by Prajāpati in the world of order) see, e.g., Hillebrandt II[2], pp. 63f., 423 n. 4 and cf. Etudes Asiatiques 25, pp. 87, 97f.

[42] *apám atiṣṭhad dharúṇahvaraṁ támo 'ntár vṛtrásya jaṭháreṣu párvataḥ*. Cf. Bergaigne II, p. 201, III, p. 146.

[43] For the accent see Wackernagel, Altindische Grammatik II/1, p. 220 ("im Behälter schwankend", but the meaning "receptacle", which Grassmann gives for *dharúṇa*, is probably incorrect, see Lüders, Varuṇa, p. 172 n. 2) and note the contrast with *agnihvára* YV. (op. c., p. 18). Renou, EVP. 17, p. 20: "Les ténèbres se tenaient (là), bouleversant le fondement des eaux."

[44] See Lüders, Varuṇa, p. 170f and, for a more detailed discussion of the hill in Vedic cosmogony, cf. History of Religions 10 (1970), p. 106f., India Maior, p. 144ff. Cf. also the short formula *girír vai Vṛtró* "Vṛtra is a mountain" in MS. IV.5.1 (62,15). This is not the place to discuss Ivanov and Toporov's etymological connection of *párvata* with Slavic *Perúnŭ*.

[45] See Leo Buschardt, Vṛtra, Det vediske Dæmondrab, pp. 55, 72f.

[46] KB[2] refers to the new edition of the Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa by E. R. Sreekrishna Sarma (Verzeichnis der orientalischen HSS. in Deutschland, Suppl. Band 9,1), Wiesbaden 1968.

[47] (17) *atha yat paurṇamāsyām Agnīṣomau yajati* (18) *Agnīṣomau vā antar Vṛtra āstām* (19) *tāv Indro nāśaknod abhi vajraṁ prahartum* (20) *tābhyām etaṁ bhāgam akalpayat paurṇamāsam*.

of theirs at the full moon sacrifice" [48], ŚB. I.6.3.13 "While Indra thus went forward (pursuing Vṛtra) he said to Agni and Soma: 'You belong to me, and I to you. He is nothing to you. Why then do you aid this Dasyu against me? Come over to me! . . .' ". This passage ends with the words "They went over to him, and after them came all gods, all sciences, all glory, all food, all prosperity" [49]. The TS. passage quoted above also ends with Indra's words "You belong to me, come over to me", whereupon all kinds of goods of Life followed Agni and Soma. In paragraph 5 of that passage there is a variant: "Heaven and earth said 'Strike not, for he is lying upon us' " [50]. In this connection attention may be drawn in passing to the wording of 4: *sá devátā vṛtrán nirhúya vártraghnaṁ havíḥ pūrṇámāse nír avapad* . . . "After he had *called off* the deities from Vṛtra he offered the *vártraghna* libation at full moon". This practice of calling off someone will be discussed in a later section (see p. 103).

Passages where *antár asmin, antár váruṇe* refer to the dual cosmos are not relevant in this connection [51].

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[48] (5) *Agnīṣomau vā antar Vṛtra āstām* (6) *tāv Indro nāśaknod abhi vajraṁ prahartum* (7) *tāv etaṁ bhāgam upanicakrāmatām* [v.l. *upanircakrāmatām*] (8) *yaś cainayor asau paurṇamāse*. Read *upanirakrāmatām*?

[49] ŚB. I.6.3.13 *sá vá Índras táthaivá nuttáś cáran, Agnīṣómā upamantrayáṁ cakré: 'gnīṣomau yuvám vai máma stho yuváyor ahám asmi ná yuváyor eṣá kíṁ caná káṁ ma imáṁ dásyuṁ vardhayatha, úpa má 'vartethām iti.*

[50] TS. II.5.2.2–3 *ténā 'bhy àyata tāv abrūtām Agnīṣómau: má prá hār āvám antáḥ sva iti, máma vai yuvám stha ity abravīn, mám abhy étam iti.*

[51] It is not always possible to draw a sharp dividing line between the undifferentiated primordial world and the nether world of the organized cosmos, as the latter preserves some characteristics of the first (cf. Hist. of Rel. 15, p. 118 n. 22). In VII.87.5 *tisró dyávo níhitā antár asmin tisró bhúmīr úparāḥ ṣáḍvidhānāḥ, gṛtso rā́jā Váruṇaś cakra etám* . . . "Three heavens are placed within him, three earths below them, arranged as six, King Varuṇa, able (?), has made this [golden swing]" there seems to be, in the words *antár asmin*, a reminiscence of Varuṇa as a representative of the older world of the Asuras, in which the world was contained as a potentiality. In V.47.3 *ukṣá́ samudró aruṣáḥ suparṇáḥ pū́rvasya yónim pitúr á viveśa* "The bull, the reddish eagle, entered the womb of the primordial father" the poet means the nether world, whatever the exact meaning of *samudró* may be (Geldner: "Meer des Lichts", Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. I², p. 323: the moon). In VII.86.2, a Varuṇa hymn which immediately precedes that quoted above, the text reads: *utá svayā́ tanvà sáṁ vade tát kadā́ nv àntár Váruṇe bhuvāni, kím me havyám áhṛṇāno juṣeta kadā́ mṛḷīkáṁ sumánā abhí khyam*. The poet no doubt speaks of his entering, in a visionary state of mind, *the palace* of Varuṇa, which is described in VII.88.5 *bṛhántam mānam . . . sahásradvāram . . . gṛhám*. Renou, EVP. V, p. 70 rightly renders the stanza "Alors je me consulte en moi-même: quand donc serai-je dedans Varuṇa? Est-ce qu'il daignerait agréer mon offrande sans être courroucé? Quand apercevrai-je (sa) compassion, (en sorte que j'aie) l'âme apaisée?" [Otherwise Renou, La pensée religieuse de l'Inde ancienne, 1942, p. 60f. "Quand donc serai-je à nouveau proche de Varuṇa?," Geldner: "Wann werde ich wohl dem Varuṇa nahe kommen?" (cf. also Siebenzig Lieder des Rigveda, 1875, p. 6), K. Hoffmann, Injunktiv, p. 246 "Wann werde ich drinnen bei Varuṇa sein?"]. Thieme, Mitra and Aryaman, p. 65 translated "When shall I get inside of True-Speech?" with the following comment: "It literally says that the poet wants to reach that point where he is never again to

We can now return to X.124.4a *bahvíḥ sámā akaram antár asmin*. Since the poet refers to the undifferentiated sexless primordial world, Vodskov [52] was right in comparing V.2.2 *pūrvír hí gárbhaḥ śarádo vavárdha 'paśyaṁ jātáṁ yád ásūta mātā́* "Many years the foetus had been growing, I saw him when his mother brought him forth so that he was born". Mythologically, *antár asmin* "within him" (that is, in the Father Asura) is equivalent to *ásurasya jaṭhárād* (III.29.14), *vṛtrásya jaṭháreṣu* (I.54.10), *antar vṛtre* (in the brāhmaṇas) and to the mother. They are all expressions for the mythological notion of an unorganized world which was darkness (*támas*). Therefore, Bergaigne, Rel. védique III, p. 146, was perfectly right in translating "dans son sein". This explains why in stanza 1 of the same hymn X.124 Agni is addressed with the words *jyók táma áśayiṣṭhāḥ* "for a long time thou hast been laying in the darkness" [53]. It is the darkness out of which light was to be born.

4b *pitáraṁ jahāmi*

As we have seen in the preceding section, at the moment when the Devas appear as an entirely new element outside the world of the Asuras, some entities go over from the Asuras to the new gods. This process of reorganization of the original world is described in various ways, which may here be briefly summarized before some details are discussed more thoroughly: A. Indra releases the entities from the bonds of the primordial world by breaking its power of obstruction (*vṛtrá*). B. The entities go over to the gods, even before Indra accomplishes his demiurgic act, either of their own accord (see, e.g., p. 16) or because they have been called forth by Indra (cf. *nirhū́ya*, p. 18). C. They are stolen from the primordial world before Indra's exploit, by a mythological figure who comes "from outside" (his place of origin is never specified) and overcomes the fiendish powers of that world: thus Mātariśvan steals Agni, and the *śyená* or *suparṇá*, Soma. For a more ample discussion see below, p. 102. The idea which underlies the different processes of B and C was apparently that Indra was unable to accomplish his act unless he was first strengthened by the powers of Soma. Hence the logical contradiction of a god who must drink Soma to acquire the power needed to deliver Soma. In the

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leave the sphere of true speech, never again to be involved in untruth". In *IIJ.* 8, p. 109 n. 68, the question was raised whether in *antár váruṇe* the word may still have been used as an appellative for the nether world, its application as a proper name to the god being due to taboo. It may be objected that as early as *circa* 1380 B.C., in the treaty of the Mitanni king Šattiwaza, Varuṇa was already used as a proper name. However that may be, the inference drawn from the Vedic material that Varuṇa's palace was in the nether world (*IIJ.* 8, p. 107ff.) is confirmed by the epic, which locates it in the Pātāla (cf. Mhbh. V.96.5. *avagāhya bhūmim* and see n. 305).

[52] See Vodskov, Sjæledyrkelse og Naturdyrkelse p. 211.

[53] Cf. X.51.5 *támasi kṣeṣy agne*. For the function and the form of the aorist see K. Hoffmann, Injunktiv, p. 157 (with n. 100), and Johanna Narten, Sigmatische Aoriste, p. 60, 255 respectively.

Yajurveda there is a fixed formula which says that Indra slew Vṭtra with the help of Agni and Soma [54].

In X.124 we are concerned with the *evocatio*, the calling off of Soma, along with the change of sides of Varuṇa, Agni and Soma. The poet apparently did not regard the two notions as basically different. The *evocatio* occurs in 6c, where Indra addresses Soma with the words "Let us slay the *vṛtrá* (*Vṛtrá*). Come out, O Soma!" (*hánāva vṛtráṁ niréhi Soma*).

On the other hand, the gods go over of their own accord in 4c "Agni, Soma and Varuṇa, they go over" (*Agníḥ Sómo Váruṇas té cyavante*) and in 4b "preferring Indra I leave the father" (*Índraṁ vṛṇānáḥ pitáraṁ jahāmi*). The last pāda shows a well-known pattern, which Geldner [55] has rightly recognized in Atharvaveda XII.1.37 "The pure earth starts in fright away from the serpent (*sarpá*)" and "choosing Indra, not Vṛtra, she, the earth, adheres to Śakra, the lusty bull" [56]. Pāda c *Índraṁ vṛṇānā́ pṛthivī́ na Vṛtrám* should especially be noted [57]. Geldner also points to RS. IX.97.41 "That great deed the bull Soma has performed that he, the embryo of the waters, chose the gods" (*apā́ṁ yád gárbhó 'vṛṇīta devā́n*). A similar situation is found as late as the Mahābhārata: while in the myth of the Churning of the Ocean Śrī is among the first goods of Creation that emerge from the primeval waters through the joint effort of Asuras and Devas [58], in her conversation with Indra (XII.221.26–27) she herself gives an entirely different account of her transition to the gods: [59] "Formerly I lived among the Asuras, although I am the origin of Truth and Law. When, however, I saw that they were wicked, I preferred to live with thee". (Śakra said:) "What was the behaviour of the Daityas among whom thou livedst, O fine-faced woman? And what didst thou see which made thee come here, leaving the Daiteyas and Dānavas?" [60] A more or less parallel passage (Mhbh. XII.91.21–22) describes how she left Bali: "Then Śrī went away from him, as she lacked majesty (living) with him. (22) Thereupon, having left him, she went to Pākaśāsana [Indra]. Afterwards he [Bali] regretted it when he saw Śrī (living) with Puraṁdara

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[54] Cf. MS. II.1.3 (5,1), KS. XXIV.7 (97,18), KKS. XXXVII.8 (202,20) *agnīṣómābhyāṁ vai vīryèṇé 'ndro vṛtrám ahan*, TS. I.6.11.6, VI.1.11.6, AB. II.3.12 *agnīṣómābhyāṁ vā́ Índro vṛtrám ahan*. In ŚB. XI.1.6.19 Agni and Soma are called Indra's brothers. See also RS. IX.61.22 *sá pavasva yá ávithé 'ndraṁ vṛtráya hántave*, and cf. Etudes asiatiques 25 (1971), p. 87.

[55] In the introduction to his translation of X.124 (Übersetzung III, p. 352f.)

[56] *yā́pa sarpáṁ vijámānā vimṛ́gvarī yásyām ā́sann agnáyo yé apsv àntáḥ, párā dā́syūn dádatī devapīyúṁ Índraṁ vṛṇānā́ pṛthivī́ ná vṛtrám, śakráya dadhre vṛṣabhā́ya vṛ́ṣṇe.*

[57] Cf. MS. III.7.3 (77, 16), KS. XXIV.1 (90,7), KKS. XXXVII.2 (195,17/228,1), TS. VI.1.6.5.

[58] Mhbh. I.16.34 crit.ed. (= Matsyapurāṇa 250.3) *Śrīr anantaram utpannā ghṛtāt pāṇḍuravāsinī*. Cf. Mbhb. XII.34.13, Bhāgavata Purāṇa VIII. 8.8 *tataś cāvir abhūt sākṣāc Chrī ramā*.

[59] Hopkins, Epic Mythology, p. 47, wrongly characterized this passage as a late moralization.

[60] *asureṣv avasaṁ pūrvaṁ satyadharmanibandhanā, viparītāṁs tu tān buddhvā tvayi vāsam arocayam (Śakra uvāca) kathaṁvṛtteṣu daityeṣu tvam avātsīr varānane, dṛṣṭvā ca kim ihāgās tvaṁ hitvā daiteyadānavān?*

[Indra]" [61]. Another illustration of this mythical pattern, viz. Uśanā Kāvya's going over from the Asuras to the Devas, will be discussed on p. 93ff.

After these introductory remarks stanza 2 of X.124 will be clear: "Now that I, being a Deva, go stealthily away from him who is no Deva, I go, looking forward, to Life: while leaving, being unfriendly myself, him who was friendly (towards me), I go over from my own party to a foreign lineage" [62]. The implication is that, before the Devas arrived on the scene as a foreign element, Agni, as a child of the primordial world and born from the womb of the Asura [63], was himself an Asura. In several passages he is, indeed, denoted as such [64]. Cf., e.g., IV.2.5 "This (sacrifice), O Asura, comprises oblations, it secures us offspring, it is long-extended wealth with a broad foundation, which secures (the possession of, or predominance in) a *sabhā*" [65]. Like Varuṇa and Soma, Agni has an ambiguous character. Just as in the ritual Soma is tied up (*úpanaddha*) as long as he is in Varuṇa's power, there is also an *Agnír úpanaddhaḥ*. See Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 60f. and for the interpretation IIJ. 15, p. 231 [66]. Such statements as JB. II.155 line 7 *tasmād āhur agnīṣomāv asuryāv iti* refer to this particular mythological situation, which has its counterpart in the ritual, e.g., when the Soma-plant has just been bought from the Soma vendor. Cf., e.g., KS. XXXIV.3 (37,19) *somo vā eṣo asurya iti tu, tasmān nā 'bhiṣutyaḥ* [67]. These mythological notions of a nether world aspect of Agni and Soma have been preserved with a remarkable tenacity. In the

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[61] (21) *athā 'smāc* (viz. Bali) *chrīr apākrāmad yā 'smin nā 'sīt pratāpinī* (22) *tatas tasmād apakramya sā 'gacchat pākaśāsanam, atha so 'nvatapat paścāc Chriyaṁ dṛṣṭvā puraṁdare.* I take *pratāpin* in the sense "majestic, powerful" since *yā 'sminn āsīt pratāpinī* ("burning, scorching, paining") would not seem to make sense. In V.106.12 *atra pātālam āśritya Varuṇaḥ śriyam āpa ca* the word *śrī* is apparently used as an appellative.

[62] (2) *ádevād devāḥ pracátā gúhā yán prapáśyamāno amṛtatvám emi, śivāṁ yát sántam áśivo jáhāmi svāt sakhyād áraṇīṁ nábhim emi.* It should be noted that *amṛtatvám* can be construed with *emi* (Vodskov) or with *prapáśyamāno* (von Bradke, Hillebrandt, Geldner). For *sakhyá* in the sense of "party" see IIJ. 4, pp. 237, 250.

[63] III.29.14 *yád ásurasya jaṭhārād ájāyata* (see n. 41) and 11a *gárbha āsuró* with Geldner's note (Übersetzung I, p. 363) "Asurisch *(asurá)* heisst Agni, solange er verborgen ist." Cf. also Renou, EVP. 12, pp. 70, 126.

[64] See Bergaigne, Rel. véd. III, p. 145, Geldner, Ved. Studien II, p. 299 n. 1.

[65] *íḷāvāṁ eṣó asura prajávān dīrghó rayíḥ pṛthubudhnáḥ sabhávān.* Cf. Renou, EVP. 13, p. 4 and his comment (p. 88): "Agni comme Asura, càd. 'maître', emploi reflétant un état antérieur à l'accession des devá." See also ibid., p. 145 (on Agni as an Asura).

[66] In view of ŚB. I.4.1.34 the three Agnis mentioned in TS. II.5.8.6 (viz. of the gods, the *pitáras* and the Asuras) are probably due to a later systematization: *tráyo vā agnáyo, havyavāhano devānām, kavyavāhanaḥ pitṛṇāṁ, sahārakṣā āsurāṇām.* The name *sahārakṣas* "accompanied by Rākṣasas", although correctly given as such by Eggeling, SBE. XII, p. 110f. (I.4.1.36), has caused some slips: Ludwig, Der Rig Veda IV, p. XVII *(sahasrārakṣaḥ)*, Keith ("guardian").

[67] In this connection the identification of Soma with Vṛtra should be considered. Cf. MS. III.7.8 (87,17) *Sómo vaí Vṛtráḥ*, KS. XII.3 (165,1), ŚB. III.4.3.13; 9.4.2, IV.1.4.8; 2.5.15 *Vṛtró vaí Sóma āsīt.* Geldner refers to RS. IX.74.7; 99.1 (Vedische Studien II, p. 299 n. 1). See Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. III², pp. 234–236 (= II², p. 186) and cf. History of Religions 10 (1970), p. 107.

epic description of the town Pātāla in Varuṇa's subterraneous *nāgaloka* (Mhbh. V.97.3f.) both an *āsuro 'gniḥ* and the *amṛta* are said to be present [68].

4c. *Varuṇa's ádhipatyam*

Before the creation of the organized dualistic cosmos as well as after it, Varuṇa's position appears to have been, like that of Agni and Soma (and perhaps even more so), basically ambiguous. This ambiguity, however, is of a characteristically subtle nature. Very seldom does he overtly act as an opponent of Indra, and never does he fight the Devas as a warrior. In the cosmogonical fight against the powers of the primordial world Indra's attacks are exclusively directed against Vṛtra and the primordial hill, in which the force of obstruction is concentrated [69]. As far back as the eighties of the nineteenth century, however, Bergaigne and von Bradke had rightly stressed the antagonism between the two gods in the Rigvedic hymns IV.42 and X.124. The latter hymn, however, deals with the moment when the fight was ended and the Devas had acquired the supremacy. Its importance lies in the fact that it shows how the poets conceived the organization of the cosmos after the defeat of the Asuras, and Varuṇa's incorporation in the world of the "second creation". As for IV.42, it does show the antagonism between Indra and Varuṇa during the cosmogonical fight but in the form of a bragging contest (*vívāc*). Whether or not the hymn has been composed for a royal consecration, this does not alter the fact that the general structure of vv. 1–6 points unmistakingly to a verbal contest [70]. Cf. the first words of these verses: *máma* (1), *ahám* (2), *ahám* (3), *ahám* (4), *mám* (5), *ahám* (6). In the first three verses Varuṇa is speaking. He refers to the *primordial* character of his sovereignty: "I am king Varuṇa, to me belonged that primordial sovereignty (*asuryàṇi prathamá*)" (v. 2).

[68] *atrā 'suro 'gniḥ satataṁ dīpyate vāribhojanaḥ, vyāpāreṇa dhṛtātmānaṁ nibaddhaṁ samabudhyata* (4) *atrā 'mṛtaṁ suraiḥ pītvā nihitaṁ nihatāribhiḥ*. Cf. also I.19.6 *pātālajvalanāvāsam asurāṇāṁ ca bandhanam*. In Mhbh. III.221.15 Bomb. Night is said to have given birth to Agni and Soma (which would be reminiscent of Hesiod, Theogonia 107, 123f., 211f.): *niśā tv ajanayat kanyām Agnīṣomāv ubhau tathā, Manor evā 'bhavad bhāryā suṣuve pañca pāvakān*, but the correct reading is without any doubt *niśāṁ* (III.211.15 crit. ed.).

[69] For VI.68.2 *vṛtratúrā*, said of Indra and Varuṇa, see p. 44 and Bergaigne III, pp. 140, 142. This is a case of incidental assimilation, just as when Indra and Viṣṇu are said to stride out intoxicated by Soma (RS. VI.69.5, one of the most instructive passages in this respect), or when Indra and Varuṇa are implored to give their *mārḍīká* "mercy" (VII.82.8, cf. Yt. 10.5 *āca.nō jamyāṭ marždikāi*). Varuṇa's natural position, however, is *outside* the battle-field, see pp. 38, 106f., 108f. At best, he helps the Devas, e.g., JB. I.180. As a rule, however, the Vedic Varuṇa does not fight and cannot, therefore, be defeated. In the epic he fights the Daiteyas with his nooses (Mhbh. III.42.27–29). Different are Harivaṁśa App. I. 42.2209 (but cf. 42.2146 !) and the Purāṇas (nn. 445, 448).

[70] See Bergaigne III, p. 142, von Bradke, p. 31. The interpretation of IV.42 as a cosmic *vívāc* was first suggested in IIJ. 4 (1960), p. 270 n. 80b and Numen 8 (1961), p. 38, that as the hymn of a "Königsweihe" by Lommel, Festschrift Schubring, p. 32ff. and accepted by Schlerath, Königtum, p. 160. But see p. 42 and Gonda, Dual Deities, pp. 234-248.

Varuṇa tries to disguise the difference between himself and Indra: "I, Varuṇa, am (also) Indra . . . I have united these two wide, deep and well-founded worlds and have supported them" (v. 3). Indra, who comes second as the new-comer and pretender in this world and who cannot base his claims on old rights, is speaking in the next three verses (4–6). He starts with disputing Varuṇa's last statement: "*I* have supported (*dhārāyam*) the sky in the seat of the Ṛtá" (v. 4b), which clearly refers to 3d *sám airayaṁ ródasī dhārāyaṁ ca*. He then goes on by stressing the difference between Varuṇa and him: "Aditi's son is righteous (*ṛtávan*) according to the Ṛtá; he has also extended the earth in a threefold way" (v. 4), "(but) me men with good horses invoke in their contests . . ." (v. 5). The verses 5–6 have an unconcealed bragging character: "I have performed all these (acts), no divine force can restrain me, as I am irresistible . . . both endless worlds fear (me) when (etc.)" (v. 6). Such passages have often been misinterpreted as though Indra were the parvenu among the gods. In fact, his position is comparable to that of, e.g., Tištrya in the Avesta (see IIJ. 4, p. 255). He is trying to win a new status, which implicitly amounts to disputing Varuṇa's. It is significant that, while Varuṇa's words are taken for granted, a human speaker, immediately after Indra's ostentation, accepts his claims: "Thine (acts) all beings know; *thou art proclaiming* (*prá bravīṣi*) *them to Varuṇa, O vedhas; thou* art famous for having struck down the obstructions (*vṛtrāṇi*), *thou* hast made the rivers stream, which were obstructed (*vṛtán*)" (v. 7). The repetition of "thou" (*tvám*) is important, since it corresponds to *ahám* (4a 5d 6a) and *mắm* (5ab) in Indra's words. What is at stake is the justness, not of Varuṇa's reference to his old rights but of Indra's claims, which he proclaims to Varuṇa and which the poet confirms. From now on the situation in the cosmos has fundamentally changed, and the two gods are further invoked together (*Indrāvaruṇā* 9b, 10c). The last fact would seem to exclude Hillebrandt's interpretation of Varuṇa as the god of the old year (Ved. Myth. I², p. 26), since in that case Varuṇa would have been replaced by Indra. Instead of it, we find the same situation as that presupposed in X.124. On the other hand, the question as to a possible ritual context in which this cosmic *vívāc* may have been dramatized is not relevant for our purpose; see p. 43. The only thing that matters here is, how this contest was visualized.

To some extent the rareness of the references to this antagonism in the Rigveda may be due to an intentional reticence on the part of the poets [71]. The assumption of a taboo, which withheld the poets from clearly expressing their ideas is not entirely unfounded. If the theory that at the beginning of every new year Indra had to re-enact his cosmogonical fight is correct, it follows that not only the powers of Chaos (the *ásurā adevắḥ*) temporarily returned into this world from the place to which

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[71] See Bergaigne III, p. 76, Lévi, Doctrine du sacrifice p. 167f., Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 127, Gösta Johnsen, IIJ. 9, p. 260 n. 74 and cf. IIJ. 3, p. 211, 5, p. 52f., and 15, p. 226.

they had fled after their defeat, but that also Varuṇa in this critical period must have reassumed his Asura-character of the primeval world. This means that at that time of the year he was not a *Devá ásura* but a dangerous Asura *tout court*. He must have been dreaded all the more as also his introduction into the world of the cosmos apparently did not result in an unambiguous position. Even in sources as late as the Mahābhārata there are indications to show that Varuṇa, although a god of this organized world, continued to maintain secret relations with the suppressed demons and the "night-side" of this world (see p. 90). His majestic character, too, was based upon his partly transcending the boundaries of the organized cosmos (see p. 38).

In this connection it may be useful to consider more closely X.124.5, quoted above:

nírmāyā u tyé ásurā abhūvan tvám̐ ca mā Varuṇa kāmáyāse,
ṛténa rājan ánṛtam̐ viviñcán máma rāṣṭrásyā 'dhipatyam éhi.

From the translations [72] it is apparent that the chief difficulty of this verse lies in the last words *máma rāṣṭrásyā 'dhipatyam éhi*. Most translators seem to assume that with these words Indra offers Varuṇa, more or less as a compensation, a subordinate position in his realm. Oldenberg, Noten *a.l.*, rejected this interpretation and translated, in essentially the same manner as Geldner in 1897, "komm her zu dem (d.h. erkenne an das)

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[72] 1876: Ludwig, "mein ist des reiches oberherlichkeit; kome [lasz es gut sein]"; 1877: Hillebrandt, Varuṇa und Mitra, p. 108 "komme heran zur Oberherrschaft über mein Reich"; 1877: Grassmann, "komm her in meines Reiches Oberherrschaft"; 1882: Bergaigne, Rel. Véd. III, p. 146 "deviens le suzerain de mon royaume"; 1885: P. von Bradke, op. c., p. 99 "und wenn du, o Varuṇa, nach mir Verlangen trägst, so komme, o König, der du Recht vom Unrecht unterscheidest, und sei Oberherr über mein Reich (oder über mich und das Reich)"; 1894: S. Sørensen, Festskrift til Vilhelm Thomsen, p. 335f. (not accessible to me); 1897: Vodskov, "kom du hid til mit Riges Overherredømme"; 1897: Geldner, Vedische Studien II, p. 298 "und wenn du, o Varuṇa, der du Wahrheit von der Lüge scheidest, o König, mich als den Oberherrn meines Reiches magst, so komm!"; 1913: Hillebrandt, Lieder des Ṛgveda, p. 21 "und du, willst du mich lieben, o Varuṇa, tritt, Recht und Unrecht scheidend, an die Oberherrschaft über mein Reich)" (otherwise 1927: Ved. Myth. II², p. 63 n. 2, where he disregards Delbrück's observations on the use of *ca* with the subjunctive, see Altindische Syntax, p. 329f.); 1951: Geldner, Übersetzung III, p. 354 "Wenn du, Varuṇa, mich lieben willst, so tritt, o König, der das Unrechte vom Rechten scheidet, die Oberherrschaft meines Reiches an!"; 1965: Renou, EVP. 14, p. 29 "Si toi, tu m'aimes, ô Varuṇa, toi qui discrimines, ô Roi, d'avec l'Ordre ce qui est non conforme à l'Ordre, adhère à la souveraineté sur mon empire!" Recent translations (e.g., P. Horsch, Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur [1966], p. 239 n. 3) are virtually identical with Geldner's. J. J. Meyer's interpretation of this passage in Trilogie altindischer Mächte und Feste der Vegetation (1937), III, p. 213 (cf. p. 210) is based on a misunderstanding of the mythological context. Renou's comment (p. 98) "*éhi*, nuance conforme à *emi* 2b" is not quite clear to me: in 2b Agni leaves the father Asura, whereas here Soma is invited to *come* to Indra (*ā* + *i-*). In any case, it explains nothing about the *ádhipatya*.

ádhipatyam, das ich in meiner Königsherrschaft ausübe" [73]. Several objections must be raised to this interpretation.

First, the words *máma rāṣṭrásya* are more problematic than is commonly realized. They seem to suggest that Indra is the king of the new order which he has inaugurated. This, however, is clearly contradicted by the Vedic texts. Our reconstruction of the Vedic cosmogonical myth implies that Indra is a seasonal god. He mainly functions in the short period during which in later times the Indradhvaja was erected, that is, about seven days. Only then is he the principal god who restores life and renews the cosmic order (as the symbolism of the tree demonstrates). No more than Varuṇa, however, is Indra a god of the totality. During his festival, it is true, the tree (with which he is identified and which in classical texts is even called Indra) is the cosmic centre. In the system of classification, however, he is never localized in the centre.

It need hardly be pointed out that *rājan* is the characteristic function of Mitra and Varuṇa [74], whose mother Aditi therefore bears the title *rājaputrā* "mother of kings". Theirs is the *kṣatrá* [75], just as Ahura Mazdā's power is symbolized by his *xšaθra* [76]. Indra's relation to the Devas, on the other hand, is characterized by his being *jyeṣṭhá*. Cf., e.g., VIII.63.12 *índrajyeṣṭhā asmán avantu devāḥ* [77], ŚB. III.4.2.2 *índrajyeṣṭhā devá íti*. Only once, in one of the late Vedic texts (TB. I.5.6.4) does the term *índrarājan* occur, preluding the classical use of such terms as *devādhipa*, *amararāja*, etc. [78]. Indra, it is true, is often called a king [79], but he is a

[73] There is no reason to doubt (with Oldenberg, *Noten*) the correctness of *ádhipatyam*, the analysis of the Padapāṭha. See Wackernagel-Debrunner, Altindische Grammatik II/2, p. 817. Incorrect Edgerton, Language 19 (1948), p. 112. In such matters we may trust the Padakāra's knowledge of the Vedic language, since he would scarcely have invented a non-existent *ádhipatyam* instead of *ādhipatyam* (AS. VS. MS., etc.).

[74] Whatever the exact meaning of the term *samrāj*, which is the characteristic epithet of Varuṇa (VII.82.2), the latter's kingship is sometimes said to be universal, as in II.27.10 *tvám víśveṣām Varuṇā 'si rājā yé ca devá asura yé ca mártāḥ* (see p. 39), AS. I.10.1 *ayáṁ devānām ásuro vi rājati, vāśā hí satyá Váruṇasya rājñaḥ*, MS. I.6.11 (104,2), II.2.1 (15,18), ŚB. XII.8.3.10 *Váruṇo vai devānāṁ rājā*. Of a special nature are Varuṇa's words in his bragging contest with Indra IV.42.1 *víśvāyor víśve amṛtā yáthā naḥ, krátuṁ sacante Váruṇasya devá rājāmi kṛṣṭér upamásya vavréḥ* (see p. 22). Although Varuṇa begins with stressing his position as *rājā* (a: *máma dvitá rāṣṭráṁ kṣatríyasya*), this *rāṣṭrám* is specified with a reference to his *krátu* (cf. Ahura Mazdā's *xratu*). It is also Varuṇa who lays the *krátu* in the hearts of men, cf. V.85.2 *hṛtsú krátuṁ Váruṇo apsv Àgníṁ divi sūryam adadhāt Sómaṁ ádrau*. The exact nature of this kingship, which Varuṇa possesses "from of old" (*?dvitá*) and which he seems to trace back to his position as supreme Asura in the primordial world, must still be defined in detail. It is not easy to see how the *adhipati* of the nether world could rule over the Devas, unless this was meant in a special sense.

[75] RS. V.68.3 *máhi vāṁ kṣatráṁ devéṣu*, VI.67.5 *víśve yád vām . . . kṣatráṁ devāso ádadhuḥ sajóṣāḥ*.

[76] See B. Geiger, Die Aməša Spəntas, pp. 204–232.

[77] For *índrajyeṣṭhā(sa)ḥ* in the Rigveda see I.23.8, II.41.15, VI.51.15, VII.11.5. In PB. VII.8.3 Indra is *śreṣṭha* of the gods. Cf. JB. II.128, 141, etc.

[78] Mhbh. V.10.7, I.83.6, 12 and Hopkins, Epic Mythology p. 122, Sørensen, Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata, p. 333ff.

[79] *rāṭ* I.121.3, *rājā* I.174.1, 178.2, V.40.4, VI.24.1, VII.18.11, 27.3, *rājānam* VII.31.12, *rājan* I.63.7, VI.19.10, 39.5. In VII.84.1 *rājānau* is used for addressing Indra and Varuṇa.

svarāj, a king in his own right, not a *samrāj*, which is the specific title of Mitra and Varuṇa. There can be no doubt that the poets and the priests chose their terms very carefully. In TS. V.5.9.4 the Vasus, *pitaras*, Ādityas and Maruts are invoked for protection in their respective quarters, after which the prayer ends with the words (5) *devās tvé 'ndrajyeṣṭhā váruṇarājāno 'dhástāc copáriṣṭāc ca pāntu* (see nn. 183, 328). It is likely, therefore, that an ancient distinction has been preserved in the yajus *agnihvarébhyas tvā ṛtāyúbhyā índrajyeṣṭhebhyo váruṇarājabhyo vátāpibhyaḥ parjányātmabhyaḥ* [80]. In the light of such passages the terminology of RS. X.66 is particularly interesting. The poet, after invoking in verse 1 the gods "whose senior (or superior) is Indra" (*devắn huve . . . yé . . . índrajyeṣṭhāso amṛ́tā ṛtāvṛ́dhaḥ*) goes on to say in verse 2 *índraprasūtā váruṇapraśiṣṭā yé sū́ryasya jyótiṣo bhāgám ānaśúḥ* "(the Maruts) who, impelled by Indra and by the command of Varuṇa, have got their share of the sunlight" [81]. This does not necessarily point to a difference of rank, one being superior to the other, but it certainly proves that Indra was not, in Vedic mythology, the *rājan* of the Devas, even though he more than once receives that title.

When, therefore, Indra speaks of his *rāṣṭrá*, this cannot simply mean his "Königsherrschaft", unless one should limit this term to the very beginning of the organized cosmos. Nor can Geldner's translation "die Oberherrschaft meines Reiches" be correct.

When Indra has established the New Order, his role dwindles down to the comparatively modest one of a *dikpāla*, a protector of one of the quarters. The Indra festival, as we know it from later sources, illustrates his character of a seasonal god. It is inconceivable that Indra should offer Varuṇa a high rank for the brief period that he himself is the central god. Indra is speaking on behalf of the Devas to an Asura and the only sense that the poet can have attached to the words *máma rāṣṭrásya* is "the (new) reign [of the Devas] that has been inaugurated by me".

Secondly, it has often been demonstrated that as early as the Rigveda Varuṇa was closely associated with the waters [82]. There is no reason to

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[80] MS. I.3.35 (41,16) in the Dadhigraha. Cf. also KS. XXIX.5 (173,9), KKS. XLV (XLIV).6 (272,14/319,20) and TS. III.5.8a, which reads *agnijihvébhyas tvā* (with a curious accent) and has a slightly different word order. Note RS. X.132.4 (= II.27.10) *tvám víśveṣām Varuṇā 'si rājā* (with Oldenberg's note), VIII.93.11 and Bergaigne III, p. 76. See n. 74.

[81] Otherwise Geldner: "Die von Indra befehligt, von Varuṇa unterwiesen, Anteil an dem Sonnenlicht erlangt haben." The two epithets are hapaxes in the Rigveda. A late variation occurs in Kauś. 3.3 *indrapraśiṣṭā varuṇaprasūtā āpaḥ samudrād divam ud vahantu* (see Lüders, Varuṇa, p. 104f.).

[82] See, e.g., Lüders, Varuṇa, pp. 9–13, and Dandekar, Annals Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute XXI (1940), p. 190, who refers to II.28.4, 38.8, V.85.3, 6, VII.87.1, VIII.41.2, X.75.2, AS. VII.88 (83), 1. The last passage runs as follows: *apsú te rājan Varuṇa gṛhó hiraṇyáyo mitáḥ, táto dhṛtávrato rājā sárvā dāmāni* (MSS.: *dhāmāni*) *muñcatu*. Cf. MS. IV.7.8 (104,9) *samudró vai Váruṇo, dakṣiṇā́ samudró, yád vāruṇó dakṣiṇārdhá ālabhyáte yájamānasya nirvaruṇatvāyai, 'tád vā́ eṣá 'bhyànūktā* (RS. VIII.69.12): *sudevó asi Varuṇa yásya te saptá síndhavaḥ, anukṣáranti kākúdaṁ sū́rmyàṁ suṣirā́m iva, íti*, MS. II.5.6 (55,4) *etā́ vai pratyákṣaṁ vāruṇír yád ápaḥ,*

consider this the result of a later development [83]. On the contrary, it must have been the original function of Varuṇa to represent or impersonate these waters. What earlier scholars have failed to recognize is that before Indra's demiurgic act Varuṇa and the Asuras were the gods of the primordial world which consisted of the waters. After the emergence of the earth floating on the waters and the subsequent creation of the organized world, the waters (*āpaḥ, salilá, samudrá*) were thought of as being under the earth, as its foundation (*pratiṣṭhā́*) [84], as well as surrounding it. Varuṇa's association with the waters, therefore, is due to the fact that the *primeval* waters, along with their lord Varuṇa, have been incorporated in the cosmos as part of the nether world. Hence it is that Varuṇa is said to dwell amidst his seven sisters [85] and that these seven rivers, when they flow from the central mountain over the earth, are said to emerge (from the *samudrá* in the nether world) through Varuṇa's throat as through a hollow reed: VIII.69.12 *sudevó asi varuṇa yásya te saptá síndhavaḥ, anukṣáranti kākúdaṁ sūrmyàṁ suṣirā́m iva* [86]. A late confirmation of this interpretation (see n. 316) can be seen in the name Varuṇadeva, which in the thirteenth century was given to the stone slabs of water wells in Chamba State [87]. See p. 84.

In none of the discussions of X.124.5 has the technical meaning of the term *ádhipati* been given due consideration. Oldenberg, Noten II, p. 124, even regarded it as a mere synonym of *rā́jā*. In Vedic cosmogony, however, *ádhipati* is the specific term for a god or group of gods who, in the system of classification, have the function of protector(s) of one of the points of the compass. As such they exist as soon as the Cosmos arises from Chaos, for the world order is inconceivable without a system of classification. Cf. VS. XIV.30, ŚB. VIII.4.3.16 *dyávāpṛthivī́ vy àitāṁ, Vásavo Rudrā́ Ādityā́ anuvy àyaṁs, tá evā́ 'dhipataya āsan*, which Eggeling renders as follows: "Heaven and Earth went asunder, the Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas separated along with them: they indeed were the lords!" [88] A similar description occurs in JB. II.141: Prajāpati first created the Vasus,

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KS. XIII.2 (180,20) *āpo vai Varuṇaḥ*, TS. VI.6.3.4 *samudré hy àntár Váruṇaḥ*. In the Rigvedic passage quoted above the word *sudeva* should be noted: in his auspicious aspect as *sudeva* Varuṇa, although normally the god who withholds the water (see e.g. *IIJ.* 5, pp. 47, 51), is expected to let the water flow from the subterranean *samudrá*, see below, p. 27. See also Renou's remark on Varuṇa as "dieu bloqueur" in *EVP.* 7, p. 82f. In his auspicious aspect Varuṇa is identical with Mitra: Lüders, *Varuṇa*, p. 715, rightly remarks that whenever Varuṇa gives rain, Mitra is always mentioned together with him.

[83] Cf. IIJ. 8, p. 115.

[84] For references see, e.g., India Maior, p. 145 n. 1.

[85] See, e.g., Lüders, Varuṇa, pp. 51, 154, 274, and cf. India Maior, p. 151.

[86] For Geldner's entirely different translation see n. 316.

[87] See J. Ph. Vogel, Antiquities of Chamba State I, p. 31ff., and cf. IIJ. 4, p. 249, 5, p. 52, 8, p. 112 n. 91.

[88] Cf. KKS. XXVI.4 (107,13/124,23) and TS. IV.3.10.2 *téṣām ádhipatyam āsīt*. MS. II.8.6 (110,19) and KS. XVII.5 (249,4) only mention *Vásavo Rudrā́ḥ*. Cf. ChU. III.6.4 (7,4, 8,4), see p. 59.

Rudras and Ādityas. They called themselves *adhipatayaḥ*, since they were superior and senior (*śreṣṭhāḥ* and *jyeṣṭhāḥ*). Then, however, Prajāpati created Indra to be a chief and *adhipati* over them (*eteṣām . . . śraiṣṭhyāyā 'dhipatyāya*) but Indra objects "How could I be a chief, an *adhipati* over them?" (*katham eṣāṁ śreṣṭho 'dhipatiḥ syām*). The word usually denotes a function, which must be specified: Agni is the *adhipati* of Heaven, and Yama of the next world [89].

Since *ádhipati* is especially used with reference to a function in the system of classification, it should be stressed that, in spite of the fact that only a few traces of the Vedic system can be found in the Rigveda, its antiquity cannot reasonably be questioned. Similar systems are well known from various archaic cultures [90]. It is inconceivable, therefore, that later theologians could have created the Vedic system *ex nihilo:* at best they may have elaborated it.

The Atharvaveda-Saṁhitā, which is much closer to the brāhmaṇas in this respect, mentions the *ádhipatis* in several passages. In AS. III.27.1–6 they have the function of the *dikpālas* of classical literature: Agni in the East, Indra in the South, Varuṇa in the West, Soma in the North, Viṣṇu in the centre (Sāyaṇa: nadir) and Bṛhaspati in the zenith. The Yajurveda has a series of formulas in which each of the quarters is addressed with its own specific name and its specific *ádhipati* is mentioned. For the western quarter it has *samrā́ḍ asi pratīcī dig Ādityā́s te devā́ ádhipatayaḥ* [91].

In the system of classification the gods are also *ádhipatis* of all kinds of entities and it is in this connection that Varuṇa is mentioned as the *ádhipati* of the waters. Cf. AS. V.24.4 *Váruṇo 'pā́m ádhipatiḥ sá mā 'vatu* (etc.), 5 *Mitrā́váruṇau vṛṣṭyā́ ádhipatī taú mā 'vatām* (etc.), TS. III.4.5.1 *Agnír bhūtā́nām ádhipatiḥ sá mā 'vatv, Índro jyeṣṭhā́nāṁ, Yamáḥ pṛthivyā́ . . . Mitráḥ satyā́nāṁ, Váruṇo 'pā́m.* This implies that Varuṇa's sphere is different from Indra's and that conflicts might arise between the two domains. Aquatic animals are not subject to Indra and this is obviously the background of a cult legend told in JB. III.193. It relates that once upon a time all creatures praised Indra except the dolphin, who declared: "I will not praise thee. I move within the waters diving near (thee?) [or: "I continue diving near (thee?) within the waters"] and only so much I praise thee" (*apsv antaś carāmy upanimajjann etāvato ahaṁ tvāṁ*

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[89] Cf., e.g., MS. III.2.3 (18,2) *Yamò 'múṣyasya lokásyā 'dhipatyam ānaśe* (last word as corrected by Caland, ZDMG. 72 [1918], p. 7), AB. III.43.1 *Agnir vai svargasya lokasyā 'dhipatis, taṁ Vasavaḥ prathamā āgachaṁs . . .*

[90] For references see Rodney Needham's "Introduction" to Primitive Classification by Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss (The University of Chicago Press, 1963), which is a translation of "De quelques formes primitives de classification: contribution à l'étude des représentations collectives", Année Sociologique VI (1901–1902), Paris 1903, p. 1–72.

[91] MS. II.8.9 (113,14), KS. XVII.8 (251,5), KKS. XXVI.7 (109.12/127,11), TS. IV.4.2.1–2, VS. XV.12, etc. For a different arrangement in the Atharvaveda and the Yajurveda see below, p. 56f.

stuyām). Cf. *upanyàmajjat* TB. I.1.3.6 (*samīpe* Sāyaṇa), KS. VIII.2 (84,14), KKS. VI.7 (66,4/77,10), but here the exact reference of *upa-* is not clear. Varuṇa moves through the sea (RS. I.164.14 *adbhír yāti Váruṇaḥ samudré*). In the same way the dolphin belongs to the sea (MS. VS. *samudrāya śiśumāro*) and as such refuses to praise Indra in the common way. Although its diving is vaguely reminiscent of "Varuṇa's trick" referred to on p. 77, it does not justify its refusal by a reference to Varuṇa.

Although in the epic Varuṇa is mostly denoted as *apāṁ patiḥ*, it is actually his *ādhipatyam* which forms part of the religious tradition. As far back as 1885 Oldenberg pointed to Mhbh. V.16.33–34 [92]. In vv. 27–28 Kubera, Yama, Soma and Varuṇa come to Indra to congratulate him with slaying Vṛtra. Indra then asks them to help him in killing the *rājā devānāṁ Nahuṣaḥ* and they ask him what their reward will be. He replies

(31) *bhavatu bhavān apāṁ patir, Yamaḥ Kuberaś ca mahābhiṣekam, saṁprāpnuvantv adya sahaiva tena* [93]. The episode then ends with the two ślokas

(33) *evaṁ saṁcintya bhagavān Mahendraḥ pākaśāsanaḥ*
Kuberaṁ sarvayakṣāṇāṁ dhanānāṁ ca prabhuṁ tathā

(34) *Vaivasvataṁ pitṝṇāṁ ca Varuṇaṁ cāpy apāṁ tathā*
ādhipatyaṁ dadau Śakraḥ satkṛtya varadas tadā

Cf. also V.109.8, where Kubera is said to have been installed as an *adhipati* over Rākṣasas, Yakṣas and Gandharvas (*ādhipatyena . . . abhiṣecitaḥ*, whereas Varuṇa was consecrated as king of the Yādasas and as protector of the waters (V.108.3), and Indra as king of the Gods (V.106.7). See p. 79f.

The relevance of these facts for the interpretation of X.124.5d *máma rāṣṭrásyā 'dhipatyam éhi* is clear. According to the Yajurveda, then, the three groups of gods were already present as *ádhipati*s at the moment when Heaven and Earth went asunder (see p. 27), that is, at the moment of Indra's demiurgic act. Since the Atharvaveda already refers to Varuṇa as *apâm ádhipatiḥ*, it can safely be assumed that the *ádhipatya* which Indra offers Varuṇa immediately after the defeat of the Asuras (when Varuṇa has gone over to the "foreign lineage" of the Devas), is the *ádhipatya* over the waters and the western quarter. The fact that this is related in the tenth book of the Rigveda should not be interpreted chronologically, as a proof that this is a notion which has developed in a period posterior to the family collections, but rather in the light of the general character of the tenth book, which is closer to that of the Atharvaveda.

On the basis of the preceding interpretation it cannot be said that

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[92] In "Ākhyāna-Hymnen im Ṛigveda," ZDMG. 39, p. 71 n. 1 (= Kleine Schriften, p. 493 n. 1). In his Noten II, p. 344, he wrongly withdrew this reference on account of Geldner's remark that "es sich dort nur um das bekannte *ādhipatyam* über die Wasser handelt" (Vedische Studien II, p. 302 n. 1). This, however, is the very thing that RS. X.124.5 refers to.

[93] For Varuṇa's *abhiṣeka* see below, p. 79f.

Varuṇa is subordinated to Indra. They are on the same level but their fields of actions are entirely different. Bergaigne's definition of Varuṇa's character as "d'une suprématie nominale et d'une autonomie morale" (Rel. védique III, p. 146), although thought-provoking like all this sharp-sighted scholar has written on Varuṇa, does not go to the root of the matter. Still less so does Hillebrandt's characterization of Varuṇa as "Herrscher" and of Indra as "Feldherr" [94]. As far as their rank is concerned they appear to be equals. In the second part of this study an attempt will be made to show that a similar essential equality is characteristic of the relation of *vidūṣaka* and *nāyaka* in the Sanskrit drama.

In this light, I think, such a passage as RS. I.101.3 has to be interpreted [95]. The stanza reads as follows:

yásya dyávāpṛthivī́ paúṁsyam mahád
yásya vraté Váruṇo yásya Sū́ryaḥ,
yásyé 'ndrasya síndhavaḥ sáścati vratám
marútvantaṁ sakhyáya havāmahe

"Indra, to whose great manly power Heaven and Earth (conform), under whose command Varuṇa and Sūrya (stand), whose command the rivers obey, him who is accompanied by the Maruts we invoke for alliance". It is possible that this passage belongs in the context of the New Year festival. According to the Taittirīya Saṁhitā Indra was born on New Year's eve (*ekāṣṭakā*) [96] but his festival lasted only five to seven days, at least in the account of Purāṇic texts, and the Indra tree, which symbolized the cosmic centre and the world pillar, was at the end of the festival removed and thrown into a river. Although nothing is known about a Vedic Indra festival, it is quite likely that the Vedic contests of a potlatch-like character took place about the beginning of a new year (IIJ. 5, p. 169ff.) and stood under the patronage of Indra. However that may be, only a special occasion can have induced a poet to describe the relation between Indra and Varuṇa in such terms. In any case, the passage quoted, isolated as it is, is insufficient to prove Varuṇa's subordination to Indra [97].

A third and last objection that must be raised to Oldenberg's inter-

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[94] In one of his earliest publications, Varuṇa und Mitra (1877), p. 103.

[95] See Bergaigne, Rel. véd. II, p. 188, III, pp. 142, 219.

[96] *ekāṣṭakā́:* Cf. AS. III.10.12, Paipp. I.106.4, KS. XXXIX.10 (127,7), TS. IV.3.11.3 *ekāṣṭakā́ tápasā tápyamānā jajāna gárbham mahimánam Índram, téna dásyūn vy àsahanta devā́ hantā́ 'surāṇām abhavac chácībhiḥ*, KS. XIII.3 (182,22) *etasyāṁ vā Indro 'jāyata* and MS. II.5.9 (59,3). See Bloomfield, ZDMG. 48 (1894), p. 579, Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. I², p. 30, Caland ad PB.V.9.1 and cf. IIJ. 4, p. 223.

[97] See n. 74. It is not necessary in this connection to discuss such passages as VI.20.2 where Indra's *asuryàm* is mentioned, or VIII.15.9 (AS. XX.106.3) *tvám Viṣṇur bṛhán kṣáyo Mitró gṛṇāti Váruṇaḥ*. For the first passage (read *asuryám*, von Bradke, Oldenberg, ZDMG. 55, p. 325f. = Kleine Schriften, p. 784f.) see von Bradke, op.c., pp. 32, 44, E. Hardy, Die Vedisch-brahmanische Periode der Religion des alten Indiens (1893), p. 23 and Geldner's translation, for the latter, e.g., Hillebrandt, Varuṇa und Mitra, p. 105.

pretation (p. 24) is that the mythological conception of figures going over from the Asuras to the Devas has a strictly fixed pattern. Above (p. 20) the epic tale of how Śrī left the Asuras and came to Indra was quoted. There is, however, a closer parallel in the Veda, as von Bradke (p. 101) has pointed out. In the Atharvaveda (ASŚ. XIX.56, ASP.III.8) it is related that *Svápna*, Sleep, originally belonged to the world of the Asuras [98] but that, when he went over to the Devas, he was offered an *ádhipatyam*. The hymn begins with the words "Out of Yama's world (*Yamásya lokád*) hast thou come hither". Verse 3 may here be quoted in full:

bṛhádgāvā 'surebhyó 'dhi devắn úpāvartata mahimánam ichán
tásmai svápnāya dadhur ádhipatyam trayastriṁśắsaḥ svàr ānaśānắḥ

"He, . . ., turned from the Asuras to the gods, seeking greatness; for this Sleep the thirty-three [gods] established an *ádhipatya* after they had reached heaven". In several archaic religions Sleep is thought of as residing, together with Death, in the primeval waters or "outside the finite world", as de Buck put it. Every night man is sleeping there and his awakening is a new birth [99]. In India a well-known illustration of this belief is Viṣṇu's sleep, during which he is resting, every year, in the waters under the earth upon the cosmic serpent Śeṣa [100]. In the Rigveda the words "like sleeping in the womb of Destruction, resting in the darkness like the sun" [101], which describe something (or some one?) that is buried (*níkhāta*) may not be significant in this context. When, however, in the cosmogonical myth the dragon is said to be fast asleep at the moment Indra slays him [102], this is, isolated though this description is, certainly more than a fancy of an individual poet. Sleep is, indeed, closely related to the destructive forces of the nether world, as is clearly stated in AS. XI.8(10).19

svápno vaí tandrír nírṛtiḥ pāpmắno nắma devátāḥ
jarā khắlatyaṁ pắlityaṁ śárīram ánu prắviśan

"Sleep, weariness, destruction, the deities named *pāpman* (evils) [103], old age, baldness, hoariness entered the body". The dragon belongs by nature to this world of sleep and *múradevas*. Sleep is associated with the west

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[98] Cf. Sāyaṇa ad v.3: *svayam Asurapakṣīyaḥ san.*

[99] See W. B. Kristensen, Symbool en Werkelijkheid, p. 19, A. de Buck, De Godsdienstige Opvatting van den Slaap, inzonderheid in het oude Egypte. Inaugurele Oratie [= Mededelingen en Verhandelingen No. 4 van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch Gezelschap "Ex Oriente Lux"], Leiden (Brill), 1939.

[100] Cf. History of Religions 10, p. 125.

[101] RS. I.117.5 *suṣupvắṁsaṁ ná nírṛter upásthe sū́ryaṁ ná dasrā támasi kṣiyántam.* The mythological allusion in *sū́ryaṁ ná . . . támasi* should in any case be noted (cf. IIJ. 8, p. 111ff.). Cf. Manu 1.5 *prasuptam iva.*

[102] RS. IV.19.3 . . . *abudhyám ábudhyamānaṁ suṣupāṇám Indra, . . . áhiṁ vájreṇa ví riṇā aparván.*

[103] For the connection between *pāpmán* and *mṛtyú* see n. 30 and below, p. 72.

in TS. V.5.10.4. Cf. also Mhbh. V.108.4,7,8, where Night and Sleep (*nidrā*) are said to be in Varuṇa's western quarter and the Daityas are described as sleeping there.

5. THE ĀDITYAS I

The fundamental problem, accordingly, is that Varuṇa although becoming a god, does not entirely lose his character of an Asura. He and Mitra are *devâv ásurā* (see p. 7), gods who are at the same time Asuras and are still addressed as such (VIII.27.20). As Devas, however, they form a special group, the Ādityas, the principal of whom is Varuṇa. Their name, "sons of Aditi", characterizes them as sprung from the undifferentiated primeval world of which the World mother Aditi is one of the most prominent personifications. She cannot, however, be discussed here in detail. This raises the question about the status of the Ādityas in the Vedic pantheon. Hillebrandt quite incidentally refers to this problem when, in a foot-note, he observes "denn gerade die Bezeichnung Asura's gibt dem Namen im ṚV. nichts Dämonisches und als die Asura's zu Dämonen geworden waren, ist Varuṇa–kein Asura mehr" [104]. Here he seems to be faintly aware of the complexity of the problem but at the same time he has recourse to an evolutionistic scheme to explain it away. It may be asked, indeed, if anything is explained by stating that at a later stage of the evolution the Asuras became demons but that Varuṇa was not affected by this change. Is this anything more than formulating the problem again in other words, leaving the basic difficulty as it was before? [105] The hypothetical historical development, handled as a last irreducible fact, remains unexplained, its main function being that of a *deus ex machina*. As for RS. X.124, Hillebrandt's ritualistic interpretation

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[104] Ved. Myth. II², p. 420 n. 1.

[105] It should be noted that it is often hard to ascertain what modern scholars, when discussing this matter, actually mean to say. Thus A. K. Coomaraswamy, The Yaksas II, p. 27, refers to ŚB. XIII.8.2.1 (one of the many passages where the Asuras are said to have been driven away from this world by the Devas, see above n. 24) and then remarks: "Varuṇa, indeed, escapes this fate for he is accepted as a Deva, and his asuric character is forgotten . . .". The last words cannot be accepted without some modification but the main question is: *by whom* was Varuṇa, in Coomaraswamy's opinion, accepted as a Deva? Apparently he thinks that this was a voluntary act of the believers, which, then, must have reflected a fundamental change in their mythological conceptions and in the religious attitude of Vedic man. If this interpretation of his words is correct, they contain an arbitrary statement which lacks a solid foundation in facts. William Norman Brown, in his juvenile paper "Proselyting the Asuras (A Note on Rig Veda 10.124)," JAOS. 39 (1919), pp. 100–123, had probably the deepest insight into the problem, but even in his article there is still a lack of clearness in that he introduces the notion "proselyting" so as to account for the fundamental change. But see his last article in JIES. 2 (1974). In this connection it should be noted that Sāyaṇa's gloss *pūrvadevāḥ* for *Ásurāḥ* (ad AS. VI.109.3) is mere guess-work: in the preceding hymn he paraphrased the same word by *Dānavāḥ* (VI.108.3) and elsewhere he uses other glosses again (II.3.3, XIX.66.1). As for the *pûrve devâḥ* of RS. VII.21.7 and X.109.4 (cf. X.90.7), they are no doubt the Sādhyas; see Geldner ad I.164.50 and the Excursus below.

of it as referring to the beginning of the new sacrificial year [106] curiously disregards the words *bahvíḥ sámāḥ* "many years" in verse 4. A strictly mythological explanation was only given by Bergaigne, who quite rightly recognized in this hymn a description of the defeat of the Asuras by the Devas [107].

It follows from the preceding discussion that the basic problem is neither one of a historical change in religious belief (the older Asuras having been replaced by the younger Devas) [108], nor one of a contrast between two different conceptions of the Divine (a unitarian versus a dualistic one) existing side by side [109]. As was pointed out above (p. 11), Bergaigne is the only scholar who has recognized the basic difference between the Asuras and Devas, although he was not aware of the fact that we are not so much concerned with two contemporaneous conceptions of the Godhead as with two different stages in the cosmogonical process (see n. 107).

[106] See Lieder des Ṛgveda (1913), p. 21: "Auch dieses Lied knüpft wie X, 51–53 an den Wechsel von Devayāna und Pitṛyāna und die Neubelebung des Opfers am Jahresanfang an ... Mit dem Übergang von der opferlosen Zeit des Pitṛyāna zu der des Devayāna assoziiert sich der neu auftauchende Gegensatz von Devas und Asuras."; Ved. Myth. II² (1929), p. 62: "Wiederbeginn der Opfer nach der langen Zeit des Tamas." Some other passages Hillebrandt interprets (as Geldner interprets this one) as referring to Agni's flight and the effort of the gods to induce him to return (Ved. Myth. II, pp. 62, 211). See above, n. 37. (Geldner's interpretation of *arká* at X.157.5 is very doubtful!).

[107] Bergaigne, Rel. véd. III, p. 145ff. (on X.124): "... indication, et cette fois tout à fait claire de la rivalité de Varuṇa et d'Indra, et de l'usurpation consommée par le second [cf. Vodskov, p. 210 n. 1!] ... la révolution qui lui a fait perdre la puissance en même temps qu'à Soma et à Varuṇa ... Agni, Soma, Varuṇa sont renversés; la révolution est faite" [= *paryávard rāṣṭrám*]; pp. 74, 76, 147 (defeat of the Asuras, victory of the Devas), p. 84 (the name *deva* characteristic of "un dieu de la conception dualiste comme Indra") and p. 3 where Bergaigne rightly opposed the gods of the dualistic cosmos to those of the undifferentiated world, although he did not yet situate this contrast in a cosmogonical context. He rightly stressed the ambiguous character of the Asuras ("caractère équivoque", pp. 69, 70, 72, 76, 84, 115, 148 etc.). Only the disintegration within the world of the Asuras brought about by the creation of the cosmos he has failed to recognize. It should be added, however, that even he had not entirely abandoned the theory of the "Verteufelung" of the Asuras as a historical process of the Vedic religion; cf. vol. III, p. 68f., p. 69 n. 2: "les rapports ordinaires d'Indra avec les Asuras, même avec les Asuras conservant encore le caractère de dieux."

[108] Thus, e.g., Kasten Rönnow, Trita Āptya I (Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift 1927), p. 10ff., Paul Horsch, Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur (1966), pp. 238, 240ff., especially p. 243 and passim.

[109] See Bergaigne, Rel. véd. III, p. 3ff., p. 142 and cf. especially p. 4: "Mais ce mythe ... s'il consacre l'antériorité *mythique* de ces mêmes dieux sur Indra, ne saurait passer pour une preuve de leur antériorité *historique*, je veux dire d'une antiquité plus haute de la conception religieuse à laquelle ils appartiennent" and p. 149: "... ces deux personnages [*viz. Indra and Varuṇa*] qui, d'après le vers VI,68,4, dépassent en grandeur tous les dieux, résument les deux conceptions de la divinité entre lesquelles semble osciller la conscience religieuse des Aryas védiques." Instructive is the reaction of an outstanding contemporary scholar to this structural approach, which can be found in P. von Bradke's Preface to his Dyâus Asura (1885), p. XIIIf. It was written three years after the publication of vol. III of Bergaigne's work.

This interpretation, however, while solving an old problem of Vedic religion, at the same time reveals the real complexity of the Vedic conception of the world. In the mythological way in which the Vedic poets express themselves, Indra breaks the power of resistance (*vṛtrahátya*). As we have seen above, this had constantly to be repeated, probably at the beginning of every year. Not only Indra, accordingly, but also the powers of resistance (*vṛtrá*), impersonated by the serpent (Vṛtrá), must have been seasonal deities [110]. If the strife between Gods and Asuras had been decided once for all by Indra's victory, the brāhmaṇas would not have referred to this primordial myth for every detail of the ritual. In fact, however, not only the ritual as a re-enactment of the mythical prototype, but any action in this world could be seen in the light of that myth because the fight between the two powers is never ended. The *locus classicus* for this idea is the commentary on TS. I.2.12.2. In the Vedic age, the conception of time as a cyclical process within the limits of a year must have led to the belief that after the crisis which marked the transition from the old year to the new one the Asuras were for the time being eliminated. It is significant that in the brāhmaṇas it is said, as a stereotyped expression of their defeat, that the Asuras were driven out from this world (see n. 24). There is a marked contrast, accordingly, with the Rigvedic dragon (the impersonation of the power of resistance of the realm of the Asuras), which is slain [111]. The implication is that the organized cosmos does not represent the total reality. Along its borders this cosmos is threatened by the demoniacal powers which, although driven away from this world into the darkness of the nether world, constantly imperil its existence. In psychological terms this myth might express a repression of the dark aspects of existence into the unconscious mind (n. 24) with, as its natural consequence, the fear engendered by that repression.

This fear is clearly expressed in such a passage as Śat. Br. I.2.4.8–11 (in Eggeling's translation): "The gods and the Asuras, both of them sprung from Prajāpati, were contending for superiority. The gods vanquished the Asuras; and yet these afterwards harassed them again. The gods then said: 'We do, no doubt, vanquish the Asuras, but nevertheless they afterwards again harass us. How then can we vanquish them so that

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[110] Bergaigne, who rightly stated that there was a mythological relationship between Varuṇa and Vṛtra, was wrong in identifying them directly (Rel. véd. III, p. 147f.). Actually the dragon is killed, whereas Varuṇa is incorporated in the group of Devas.

[111] Bergaigne, III, p. 115: "Supposera-t-on qu'il enferme les démons des ténèbres ou de la sécheresse? Mais ce serait là une conception peu conforme à l'esprit général de la mythologie védique. Les démons sons vaincus, frappés, foudroyés, déchiquetés par leurs adversaires: il n'est pas ordinairement question de les enfermer." This is true but a distinction should be made between the Asuras and Vṛtra (whom Bergaigne reckons among the Asuras). In the Mahābhārata the Asuras, driven away into the nether world of Varuṇa, are actually fettered (see below). As for the commentary on TS. I.2.12.2 (p. 321), it runs as follows: *tasmād ihaive 'dānīm eva tadupāvartanāt prāg eva devān vijayāmaha iti vicintya vajram udyatya devān abhilakṣya prahartum āgatāḥ.*

we need not fight them again?' Agni then said: 'By fleeing northwards they escape from us'. By fleeing northwards they had indeed escaped from them. Agni said: 'I will go round to the northern side, and you will then shut them in from here; and whilst shutting them in, we will put them down by these (three) worlds; and from what fourth world there is beyond these (three) they will not be able to rise again" [112]. In these words we find an awareness of the existence of a world beyond the world of order, a world of disorder and formless Chaos, over which gods and men had no control. With this fourth world, however, the reflections of the Vedic theologians had reached a limit. What was beyond the three worlds was unimaginable and the author declares himself to be uncertain about the existence of this fourth world (I.2.1.12, ŚBK. II.1.4.10): "What fourth (world) there is or is not beyond these (three) worlds, by that indeed he thereby chases away the spiteful enemy. Uncertain, no doubt, is what fourth (world) there is or is not beyond these (three) worlds . . ." (Eggeling). When this fourth world is incidentally identified with Prajāpati (ŚB. XI.1.2.8), this is entirely on the lines of the numerical speculations in which the sum total plus one symbolizes the all-embracing totality, personified by Prajāpati (cf. also Śrautakośa II, p. 781).

The same idea is implied in the conception of gods of the totality of all that is. In them a belief in the ultimate oneness of Order and Chaos, of Good and Evil, is expressed. If, however, they are a guarantee for the final victory of Order over Chaos remains questionable. Although they sometimes help the Devas to vanquish their adversaries [113], their

[112] (8) *Devấś ca vấ ásurāś ca, ubháye prājāpatyấḥ pasprdhire. té ha sma yád devấ ásurān jáyanti táto ha smaivaì 'nān púnar upóttiṣṭhanti* (9) *té ha devấ ūcuḥ, jáyāmo vấ ásurāṁs, tátas tv èvá naḥ púnar upóttiṣṭhanti. kathấṁ nv ènān anapajayyấṁ jayemé 'ti* (10) *sá hā 'gnír uvāca, údañco vaí naḥ palấyya mucyanta ity, údañco ha smaivaì 'ṣāṁ palấyya mucyante* (11) *sá hā 'gnír uvāca, ahám uttaraṭấḥ páryeṣyāmy, átha yūyám itá upasáṁrotsyatha. tấnt saṁrúdhyai 'bhíś ca lokaír abhinidhāsyấmo yád u cemấṁl lokấn áti caturthấṁ tátaḥ na sáṁhāsyanta iti.*

[113] E.g., PB. VIII.3.1 "The Gods and the Asuras contended for (the possession of) these worlds. The Gods resorted to Prajāpati; he gave them this sāman, (saying): 'By means of this sāman ye will be able to drive them away.' By it they drove them away from these worlds" (translation by Caland): *devāś ca vā asurāś caiṣu lokeṣv aspardhanta. te devāḥ Prajāpatim upādhāvaṁs. tebhya etat sāma prāyacchad: etenai 'nān kālayiṣyadhva[m] iti. tenai 'nān ebhyo lokebhyo 'kālayanta.* (Bibl. Ind.: *kālayiṣpaddham*, Kashi Skt Ser.: *kālayiṣyaddhvam*; Caland, ZDMG. 72 [1918], p. 20 and translation, p. 167 emended this to *kālayiṣyaddhva iti* with the support of the Leiden manuscript. H. C. Patyal, "On the Modal Forms of the Simple Future in the Veda", Poona 1969 [Public. Centre Advanced Study in Sanskrit, No. 32], p. 83f maintains the form in *-am*. The manuscripts will have to decide which reading is correct). Other instances are JB. III.104, where the Devas ask Prajāpati for help against the Asuras: *Devāsurā aspardhanta. te devā Prajāpatim upādhāvaṁs: tan naś chandaḥ prayacchā 'yātayāma yenā 'surān abhibhavāme 'ti. sa tapo 'tapyata. sa tapas taptvā 'tman siṁsimāyad avāpaśyat*, and TS. II.5.2.2, where Prajāpati dips the vajra so as to enable Indra to slay Vṛtra (after Tvaṣṭṛ had created the Indraśatru to avenge Indra's killing his son Viśvarūpa): *sá Prajấpatim úpādhāvac: chátrur me 'janí 'ti. tásmai vájraṁ siktvấ práyachad: eténa jahí 'ti.* Otherwise MS. II.4.3. See further n. 408. A later instance is Maitrī Up VII.10, where Brahmā gives the correct explanation of the *ātman* only to the gods, but not to the Asuras.

own position is one above the contending parties. Hence it is that Western scholars have often misinterpreted their role as due to weakness of character. Instructive, both for the position of the High God and for modern misunderstanding of his character are the words in which Hopkins describes Brahmā's role in the epics: "He is a god of asceticism, he is father of gods and demons. Therefore, to win his favor, gods and demons practice asceticism, and because he is an impartial father he grants invulnerability, etc., to either god or demon indifferently. As the demons always take advantage of this weakness, Brahman is ever engaged in preserving the world from the result of his own folly. One cannot call it ignorance, for he is prescient. He is 'equable to all', that is his boast and glory . . . but he is also well-disposed, *suhṛd*, toward both demons and gods . . ., as being equally his children" [114].

A striking illustration of this position of Brahmā is found in the Bhāratīya Nāṭyaśāstra. After Indra's victory, his killing of the Asuras and Dānavas was celebrated in the assembly of the gods by Indra's banner festival (1.55 *tasmin dhvajamahe nihatāsuradānave*). During this festival, before an audience which consisted of gods, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and Snakes (1.62), Bharata and his sons gave a dramatic performance which reproduced "how the Daityas had been vanquished by the gods" (1.57). Since, however, the theme of this performance was the extinction of Daityas and Dānavas (1.64 *prayoge . . . daityadānava-nāśane*), "all Daityas who were there assembled" were enraged at it and, at their instigation, the personified Obstacles (*Vighna*), together with the Asuras (1.66), obstructed the performance. Although Indra drives them away [115] with his *vajra*, they come back and Bharata, unable to bring the performance to an end, asks god Brahmā for a means of protection (*rakṣāvidhi*). Brahmā, who was also the inventor of the dramatic art

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[114] Epic Mythology, p. 195, where he refers to Mhbh. V.76.7 crit ed. *Pāṇḍavānāṁ Kurūṇāṁ ca bhavān paramakaḥ suhṛt, surāṇām asurāṇāṁ ca yathā vīra Prajāpatiḥ.* Cf. p. 49 "Not unlike the relations of the Rākṣasas to the Great-Father (god) is that of the Asuras, who also are continually receiving boons from Brahman" (with examples), p. 50 "Brahman gives the Asuras all boons except immortality, for immortality is withheld from them . . . The Asuras have no father-god except Brahman, for Brahman remains also their "father" and gives them not only boons but also good advice . . .".

[115] 1.71 *gateṣu teṣu vighneṣu sarveṣu saha Dānavaiḥ* ed. Ghosh, in accordance with the MS. *na* of the second edition of the Baroda text. The other editions read *nihateṣu ca sarveṣu vighneṣu (nihiteṣu* in the ed. Raghuvaṁśa). M. M. Ghosh, The Nāṭyaśāstra, The Original Sanskrit Text, vol. I², Introduction, p. xxxiv, gives the very arguments in favour of this reading which may at one time have induced a copyist to substitute *gateṣu* as an emendation for *nihateṣu*. In view, however, of verse 74 *dṛṣṭvaiva jarjaraṁ te 'pi gamiṣyanty evam eva tu*, Viṣṇudharmottara II.154.12 *dṛṣṭamātreṇa yene 'ha vidraviṣyanti*, Hemādri, Caturvargacintāmaṇi II,2, p. 401 *na tathā 'pi kṣayaṁ gatāḥ* (cf. p. 402 *taṁ dṛṣṭvā saubalaṁ sainyaṁ bhagnaṁ sa ca nipātitaḥ*) there is a possibility that *gateṣu* is the authentic reading. For the rest, it is possible, judging by the internal evidence, that the passages vv. 58–63 and 67–76a are interpolations but these questions of higher criticism are here left out of consideration. In any case the lines form part of the text as it has traditionally been handed down.

(*nāṭyaveda*) and who had instructed Bharata, now conceives the idea of creating a theatre, which Viśvakarman builds at his command. The cosmic symbolism of this building will be discussed below. Here it may be sufficient to state that it represents the world of order, protected against the demoniacal forces which threaten it from without (the "fourth world" of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa). As the demons are offended at this device which is directed against them, Brahmā tries to conciliate them by kind words (1.100 ff.): "Having heard these words of the gods Brahmā said to the Vighnas: 'Why have ye risen to destroy the performance?' Having heard this word of Brahmā Virūpākṣa, along with the Daityas (and) the hosts of Vighnas, spoke the following conciliatory words: 'By creating this Nāṭyaveda, in accordance with the wish of the gods, Thy Holiness has rejected us. It is for the benefit of the gods. Thou shouldst not do this, O Grandfather of the World; no less than the Devas, the Daityas have sprung from Thee in the beginning (v.l.: all)'. When Brahmā heard these words of Virūpākṣa, he said: 'Don't ye be angry or dejected, O faultless ones! I have created the Nāṭyaveda, which shows the alternatives of good and evil [116] of you and the gods and which takes into account the connection [117] between deeds (*karman*) and mental states. It does not onesidedly indicate the feelings of you or the gods but it is a representation of the state of the whole of the three worlds'" [118]. It should be noted that there is some similarity between the theatre as a protected area and the *vāstu*, which is the sacred ground plan for temples and palaces. V. S. Agrawala defines it as "the emergence of a divine *Kshetra* in the midst of the Āsuric universal. The forces of all the Devas are concentrated on the limited sanctified area of the Vāstu", the latter being "a complete specimen or replica of the cosmos in which light and darkness exist together" [119].

As was stated above, the epic evidence, which will be discussed below in detail, shows that Varuṇa, although incorporated in the cosmos, still maintained secret relations with that which is beyond the bounds of it. In this connection it may be asked whether the many translators of

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[116] Abhinavagupta (Baroda ed. I², p. 34 line 16f.) has the following comment: *śubham aśubhaṁ ca dharmādharmarūpaṁ sukhaduḥkhaphalatvena vibhedena kalpayaty, adhyavasāyayati nāṭyavedaḥ.*

[117] Abhinavagupta, p. 34 line 19 takes *anvaya* in the sense of descendance: *anvayo 'bhijanaḥ āryāvartādi-brāhmaṇyā . . . śceti.*

[118] *devānāṁ vacanaṁ śrutvā Brahmā Vighnān uvāca ha, kasmād bhavanto nāṭyasya vināśāya samutthitāḥ* (102) *Brahmaṇo vacanaṁ śrutvā Virūpākṣo 'bravīd vacaḥ, Daityair Vighnagaṇaiḥ sārdhaṁ sāmapūrvam idaṁ tataḥ* (v.l. *vacaḥ*) (103) *yo 'yaṁ bhagavatā sṛṣṭo nāṭyavedaḥ surecchayā, pratyādeśo 'yam asmākaṁ surārthaṁ bhavatā kṛtaḥ* (104) *tan naitad evaṁ kartavyaṁ tvayā lokapitāmaha, yathā devās tathā Daityās tvattaḥ pūrvavinirgatāḥ* (v.l. *sarve vinirgatāḥ*) (105) *Virūpākṣavacaḥ śrutvā Brahmā vacanam abravīt, alaṁ vo manyunā Daityā viṣādaṁ tyajatā 'naghāḥ* (106) *bhavatāṁ devatānāṁ ca śubhāśubhavikalpakaḥ, karmabhāvānvayāpekṣī nāṭyavedo mayā kṛtaḥ,* (107) *naikāntato 'tra bhavatāṁ devānāṁ cā 'nubhāvanam (-tra bhāvanam), trailokyasyā 'sya sarvasya nāṭyaṁ bhāvānukīrtanam.*

[119] Vasudeva S. Agrawala, Matsya Purāṇa — A Study (Ramnagar, Varanasi, 1963), p. 345.

Atharvaveda Saṁhitā IV.16 [120] have grasped the meaning of verse 5a *sárvaṁ tád rājā Váruṇo ví caṣṭe yád antarā́ ródasī yát parástāt* "King Varuṇa perceives all that is between heaven and earth and what is beyond". It seems that no one has ever wondered what the poet may have meant with this "beyond". In the cosmogonical myth of the Rigveda (X.124) we are told that only some of the Asuras went over to the party of the gods but that the other Asuras, having lost their magic power (*māyā́*), renounced their sovereignty (*paryávard rāṣṭrám*). The brāhmaṇas relate that the Asuras (that is, the *ásurā adevā́ḥ* of the Rigveda) were driven away from "these worlds". We are probably not wide of the mark when we say that by Indra's demiurgic act *ásat* was converted into *sát* (RS. VII.24.5, X.72.2) but that part of *ásat* continued to exist, on the fringe of the organized cosmos, as an unformed (rather than non-)being [121]. Only the all-embracing transcendental world of the highest gods, "in the highest heaven, in the lap of Aditi" (X.5.7), encompassed both *ásat* and *sát*. It has mostly been insufficiently realized, owing to the exalted wording of such hymns as AS. IV.16, that Varuṇa is not a high god in the strict sense of the word. The difference between Varuṇa and Prajāpati, who is "the limited and the unlimited" (ŚB. VII.2.4.30) and who encompasses all, like the year, is obvious. Similarly that between Varuṇa and Viṣṇu, who with his three strides covers (and creates) nether world, upper world and the transcendental third world of the cosmic totality[122]. As an Āditya, Varuṇa belongs to the Devas, who are "on this side of Creation" (X.129.6). What is "beyond these (three) worlds" [123], is the fourth world to which the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa refers. Still, the Atharvavedic stanza quoted above cannot mean anything else but that Varuṇa had some connections with the world of *ásat*. If this conclusion is correct, the poet here openly declares what is mostly only indicated in an indirect way (see below, p. 68). It will also be clear that the way in which out of the proto-Indo-Iranian **Asura* the pre-Zoroastrian high god Ahura Mazdā has developed in Iran thus poses a special problem.

Some passages might easily lead to faulty conclusions with regard to Varuṇa. Thus RS. X.132.4ab "The other one, yonder Heaven, O Asura,

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[120] See the references in Bloomfield, SBE. 42, p. 390, Whitney-Lanman, Atharva-Veda, Translation and Notes (HOS vol. 7), p. 176 and H. Lüders, Varuṇa, p. 30f.

[121] Only with regard to this "unorganized rest" of the universe can *ásat* be said to be "destructive" (Gonda, Religionen Indiens I, p. 181). For *ásat* = "undifferentiated, formless" see particularly H. Oertel, New Ind. Ant. I (1938), pp. 317–321 and the latest discussion by R. Ambrosini, Studia classica et Orientalia Antonino Pagliaro oblata I, p. 96ff. Cf. also R. N. Dandekar, India Maior, p. 93. For MS. III.7.1 (75,1) *áklptaṁ vā́ idám ásīt*, etc. see n. 36.

[122] This notion, it is true, does not seem to have been formulated *expressis verbis* before the classical period but it is so intimately interwoven with the essence of Viṣṇu's character and with his three steps that it cannot well be due to a later elaboration. See Hist. of Rel. 15, p. 117f.

[123] *imā́ṁl lokā́n áti*. Cf. RS. X.125.8 *paró divā́ pará enā́ pṛthivyā́*, X.82.5 *paró divā́ pará enā́ pṛthivyā́ paró devébhir ásurair yád ásti* and see n. 112.

was given birth to: thou, O Varuṇa, art king over all (beings)" [124] should not be interpreted as meaning that Varuṇa is a god of totality. The poet who in a late period composed this stanza has here made use of II.27.10ab "Thou art king over all, (namely) over the Devas, O Asura, and the mortal beings"[125], which restricts the range of Varuṇa's power to "this side of Creation" (X.129.6). Even more restricted it is in VII.83.5, where Varuṇa and Indra are addressed with the words "For ye two have power over the twofold wealth" (i.e., that of the upper world, which is Indra's domain, and that of the nether world, which is Varuṇa's) [126]. In the former of these two stanzas Varuṇa is contrasted with (the Asura) Heaven [127], who "was given birth to" *(sūyata)*. In view of Peter von Bradke's theory of *Dyaúṣ pitár* it should be observed that, while Varuṇa was present in the primordial world as the eldest son of the World mother Aditi, heaven existed only as a potentiality. The latter's "birth", therefore, can only be due to Indra's *vṛtrahátya*. This situation is clearly expressed in TS. II.5.2.5 "Heaven and earth said 'Strike not, for he [Vṛtra] is lying upon us' ". The cosmic duality of heaven and earth was only a potentiality in the undifferentiated unity of the primordial world, the unfolding of their dual character being prevented by the repressive power of Vṛtra. The description found in other brāhmaṇas [128] (and also well-known from Egypt) to the effect that heaven originally lay upon the earth is only a different manner of expressing the same idea of undifferentiated unity, to which Indra put an end by "propping up" the sky [129]. What the poet may have meant is that, in contrast with Dyaus, who owed his existence to Indra's intervention, Varuṇa was a god in his own right.

Bergaigne has seen the character of Varuṇa much more sharply than those scholars of the following generation who exalted the lofty character of the high ethical god. Right at the beginning of his chapter on "les dieux souverains et les dieux pères" he states "qu'à l'idée de la paternalité est souvent étroitement unie, dans les personnages en question, celle de la malveillance" (III, p. 2) and on p. 84 he gives the following striking characteristic of the Asuras: "Les Asuras devaient être des dieux auxquels les croyances des *r*ishis n'opposaient pas de démons; dieux puissants pour le mal comme pour le bien; tantôt manifestés sous la forme brillante que semble impliquer le mot *deva* . . . tantôt au contraire cachés et cachant eux-mêmes la lumière et les eaux, tous les trésors que l'homme attend du ciel; enfin, en tant qu'opposés à Indra, assimilables dans une plus ou moins forte mesure aux démons combattus et vaincus par ce dieu.

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[124] *asáv anyó asura sūyata dyaús tvám víśveṣām Varuṇā 'si rājā*. Cf. Renou, EVP. 5, p. 89 "Cet autre là-haut, le Ciel, ô Asura, fut mis au monde; (mais) toi, ô Varuṇa, tu es le roi de tous (les êtres)," and see above, p. 25.

[125] *tvám víśveṣām Varuṇā 'si rājā yé ca devá asura yé ca mártāḥ*.

[126] See above, p. 27. Similarly VII.82.4 *īśānā́ vásva ubháyasya kāráva Índrāvaruṇā suhávā havāmahe*.

[127] Although P. von Bradke's translation (p. 71) is incorrect, there can be no doubt that Dyaus was also an Asura.

[128] See n. 50.

[129] See History of Religions 10, p. 104f.

Les Asuras en général, comme Tvash*ṭri* en particulier, paraissent avoir eu dès l'origine un caractère équivoque, susceptible de s'accuser dans le sens démoniaque, comme de devenir l'expression la plus complète et la plus auguste de l'idée de la divinité". From a different starting-point and working along different lines we have arrived at results which are in some respects remarkably similar to those of Bergaigne. It is in this context that the passage of the early-classical Nāṭyaśāstra has been quoted to illustrate the complex nature of the relation between the Asuras and the Devas of the pantheon. The archaic character of the first introductory chapter of the Nāṭyaśāstra is also apparent from the fact that Indra is here still represented as the central figure among the Devas.

The later development in religious thought may either be described in terms of a shift from the worship of a seasonal god to that of the gods of totality (Prajāpati-Brahmā, Viṣṇu, probably also Śiva), which may then be explained from the seasonal rites getting into disuse, or, in a more theological way, as a shift from the exponent of the formed world that is threatened by the powers of the unformed *(ásat)* to the all-embracing gods who transcend this dualism and the cosmic contest (as is illustrated by the characteristic rôle of Brahmā and Viṣṇu in the epic tale of the Churning of the Ocean (see p. 104ff., Hist. of Religions 15, p. 119).

The earliest trace of such a theological re-evaluation of the idea of Indra's contest occurs in ŚB. XI.1.6.9, where it is said in a gāthā: "Never didst thou fight, nor hast thou, O Maghavan, any enemy. What is told of thy fights is only an illusion which thou hast created. Neither today nor formerly hast thou fought against an enemy". I do not think that it is right to describe this development as a tendency towards monism [130]. Nor would it seem correct to characterize Indian religious thought in general as tending towards a one-sided emphasis on the non-formed. Although there has certainly been a shift of emphasis from the formed to the non-formed, still, in the older stage of Indian religion,

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[130] (9) *tásmād āhur naìtád asti yád daivāsuráṁ yád idám anvākhyâne tvad udyáta itihāsé tvat táto hy èvá tân Prajâpatiḥ pāpmánâ 'vidhyat té táta evá parâbhavann íti* (10) *tásmād etád ṛṣiṇā 'bhyánūktam, ná tvám yuyutse katamác canâ 'har ná te 'mítro maghavan kás canà 'sti, māyét sâ te yâni yuddhány āhúr nâdyá śátruṁ ná nú purâ yuyutsa, íti*, For the interpretation see Minard, Trois Enigmes II, §§785ff., 872f., (relation to RS. X.54.2, for which see Bergaigne III, p. 83, Gonda, Four Studies in the Language of the Veda, p. 135f.). From the remarks made above it will be clear why I cannot accept Horsch's explanation in Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur (1966), p. 242: "Dieses merkwürdige Relikt einer verlorenen, mythologischen Tradition besiegelt zugleich die Alleinherrschaft des *deva* Indra, der bald vom Lichtglanz der neuen Götter des Hinduismus, die ihre Macht grossenteils den niedern, z.T. vorarischen Volksschichten verdanken, verdunkelt wird." From a different point of view Heesterman has drawn attention to the elimination of the element of contest from the ritual; see "Brahmin, Ritual and Renouncer," WZKSO. 8 (1964), p. 1ff.

man looked upon the phenomenal world as the result of a periodical strife between the powers of Chaos and Cosmos. In spite of characteristic differences there are, I think, significant similarities between Vedic and Old Germanic religious thought [131].

6. THE ĀDITYAS II: ĀDITYA AND ASURA

On the one hand, accordingly, Varuṇa is in the Rigveda still called an Asura, while, on the other hand, he is, as the principal of the Ādityas, a Deva. The single passage where the Ādityas are called Asuras [132] shows, it is true, that their character as *devá ásurāḥ* was still known to the poets. Everywhere else, however, the Ādityas are simply called *devāḥ*, e.g., II.27.4. See p. 11.

The problem as to why the name Asura has fallen into disuse in the post-Rigvedic period [133] as an epithet of Varuṇa is certainly important, but this cannot be dissociated from another one, equally important, viz., Why is it that the Rigvedic poets still continue to call Varuṇa an Asura, whereas he has become a Deva, that is, "worthy of sacrifice"? [134] In other words, What is the relation between the two terms Asura and Āditya and what were the respective functions of these two categories?

As for the first problem, this seems purely terminological. No indication can be found in our texts for a material change in Varuṇa's status and function during the whole Vedic period. The disappearance of Asura as a title of Varuṇa must, therefore, be due to causes which lay outside the god's personality. As far as I can see, the last trace of this use of *Asura* occurs in the Atharvaveda. Cf. I.10.1 "He rules, as an Asura, over the Devas" (n. 74) and, for the Asuras in general, VI.108.3 "The wisdom *(medhā)* that the Ṛbhus know, the wisdom that the Asuras know, the salutary wisdom that the Ṛṣis know".

Any attempt to answer the second question can at present only be tentative. It has been pointed out above (pp. 11, 23) that if the theory of an annual reiteration of Indra's Vṛtra-slaying and his fight against the Asuras as gods of the primeval world is correct, it then follows, first,

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[131] See G. H. van Senden, Het Werelddrama[2] (Amsterdam 1965), p. 74ff.: "Het Vormbesef in verschillende Cultuurgebieden", whose characterization of various cultures in terms of their position towards "formed" versus "non-formed" is important for a deeper insight into the background of Vedic religious thought (which he does not discuss).

[132] VIII.27.20 (to Aryamā́ Mitró Váruṇaḥ, see v. 17) *yád vā 'bhipitvé asurā ṛtáṁ yaté chardír yemá ví dāśúṣe*. See von Bradke, p. 75, Bergaigne III, p. 87. On the *asuryà* of the Ādityas (only II.27.4 *dīrghádhiyo rákṣamāṇā asuryàm*) see von Bradke, p. 33f., Bergaigne l.c.

[133] Cf., e.g., Paul Horsch, Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur, p. 236. On p.238 n. 2 there is a reference to Hillebrandt, Vedische Mythologie III[1], p. 439, who concluded from the rare occurrence of the name Asura in the family books of the Rigveda that the "Asura-cult" was already waning.

[134] Cf. Arbman, Rudra, p. 152, who cites instances of the use of the word *deva* for demons in later literature.

that Indra was a seasonal god [135] and, secondly, that there must have been a belief which held that in the critical period before the beginning of the New Year the world had returned to the state of the primordial Chaos, a belief well-known from other archaic religions. In other words, in this period Devas and Asuras were again opposed, as they had been in the beginning, and Indra had to repeat his contest for supremacy with Varuṇa, who at this moment was again the protagonist of the world of undifferentiated unity (see p. 24). To the Rigvedic poets this contest was not a mere legend from a dim past but a reality of their actual world. In RS. IV.42, which contains a bragging contest between the two gods (see p. 22), Indra says (among other things) that he *institutes* the race *(āji)*, which was a form of a socio-religious contest [136]. If it should be true that the hymn had been composed for a special ritual purpose, this would only prove the more forcibly that the cosmogonical event, as *the* paradigm for actual social life, was conceived as being reiterated continually and (probably) periodically. According to J. C. Heesterman, The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration (1957), p. 222, the *rājasūya* must originally have been one of the yearly festivals which "cluster round the turning

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[135] For the uncertainty about Indra's origin (who apparently comes "from nowhere") see Minard, Trois Énigmes II § 786a. Cf. AS. III.10.12 (etc.), where Indra is said to have been generated by the New Year's eve and to have slain the Dasyus or Asuras (see n. 96), and further RS. I.132.2ab *svarjeṣé bhára . . . áhann Índro yáthā vidé śīrṣṇá-śīrṣṇo 'pavácyaḥ* "Im Kampf, wenn es gilt das Sonnenlicht zu gewinnen . . ., an dem Tage ist Indra, wie bekannt, Haupt für Haupt anzurufen" (Geldner, "en (ce) jour" Renou, EVP. 17, p. 46, instead of "erschlug", "tötete", Grassmann, Ludwig, Pischel, Ved. Studien 1, p. 68). It remains to be seen to what extent the seasonal character of Indra affords an explanation for the well-known passage II.12.5 *yáṁ smā pṛchánti kúha séti ghorám utém āhur naíṣó astī 'ty enam* "He about whom (people) ask 'Where is he?' and about whom they say 'This one is not (present)'." The Dutch equivalent would be "Hij is er niet" (German: "Er ist nicht da"). For the continuation of the relative clause see Caland, Zur Syntax der Pronomina im Avesta (Amsterdam, 1891), p. 46, Chantraine, Grammaire homérique II², p. 243. Modern commentators who refer to the later *nāstikas* disregard the fact that in the parallel passages the poets do not question Indra's *existence*, their main concern being who has *seen* him, or his act (V.30.1 *kvà syá vīráḥ kó apaśyad Índram*, VI.27.3 *Índra nákir dadṛśa indriyáṁ te*, 100.3 *ká īṁ dadarśa*), and *where* he is (II.12.5 *kúha séti*, VIII.64.7 *kvà syá vṛṣabhó yúvā* and V.30.1 quoted above). Hence the answer *ihá* in VIII.100.4 *ayám asmi jaritaḥ páśya mehá víśvā jātāny abhy àsmi mahnā* "Here I am, O singer, see me here, I surpass by my greatness all races", which is a reaction to 3 " 'There is no Indra', some one says, 'Who has seen him, whom shall we worship?' " People do not know (that is, have not yet experienced) the *maghavattvá* of the *maghávan*, because no one has yet seen his Indric force (VI.27.3), but his existence is obviously not questioned. What matters is the god's epiphany, which becomes manifest by his divine acts. In II.12 the poet refutes the assertion of "some ones" by merely pointing to the god's accomplishing again his exploits. This method of rebuttal would not seem favourable to the theory that "There is no Indra" is the counterthesis in a verbal contest (see J. C. Heesterman, WZKSO. XII–XIII [1968], p. 180). For the different problem posed by X.54.2 *māyét sā́ te yáni yuddhā́ny āhúḥ* "c'est (un tour de) ta magie, les combats qu'on dit (que tu as) livrés" (Minard, Trois Énigmes II, p. 286), see p. 40 and n. 130.

[136] See v. 5 *kṛṇómy ājím maghávā 'hám Índraḥ (kṛ*, not *yā*!).

of the year and are all in some way or other concerned with the regeneration of the year, which is conceived of both as an actual time unit and as a cosmological entity". A striking confirmation of this conclusion is furnished by the fact that an annually repeated *abhiṣeka (saṁvatsarābhiṣeka)*, usually performed about the time of the first *(pūrvābhiṣeka, prathamābhiṣeka)*, still exists. See M. R. Pant, J. Nep. Res. Centre I (1977), p. 96. Therefore, the idea of an annual reiteration of the cosmogonical strife seems well-founded, and there is no contradiction between Lommel's interpretation of the ritual use made of RS. IV.42 and the cosmogonical explanation as a *vivāc*. No poet would have thought of composing a hymn in which the primordial strife for supremacy is so dramatically depicted if that contest had once for all been decided in the mythical beginning. If, however, the contest was repeated every year, nothing is more natural than that it took place during a renewal of the king's status. On the other hand, the hymns show beyond doubt that, in terms of mythology, Indra had regularly to repeat his exploit of the *vṛtrahátya*. It may, therefore, be considered plausible that also his contest with Varuṇa, which resulted in the latter's adoption into the ordered cosmos, was repeated. Dandekar, India Maior, p. 93, argues that Vedic texts do not speak of repeated creations and refers to RV. VI.48.22 "Only once was the heaven born, once the earth". It is certainly true, that the texts do not say that heaven and earth were "born anew" like Agni (VIII.43.9 *gárbhe sáñ jāyase púnaḥ*) but they do not contradict the conclusion of an annual renewal. What the poet stresses at the end of VI.48 is that Pṛśni has only once given birth (to the Maruts) and that no one else was born after *(tád anyó nánu jāyate)* and in confirmation of his statement he refers to heaven and earth. It can, indeed, be stated that after creation no *other* heaven or earth has arisen, but this does not contradict the obvious fact that the cosmogony was periodically reiterated.

The question then arises if Varuṇa bears the title Asura in the Rigveda because this collection of hymns was in its essence (that is, in the family books) designed for the celebration of the New Year period of contests (see IIJ.4, p. 217ff.). This cannot definitely be proved, but since there are in the Rigveda traces of a competitiveness between Indra and Varuṇa, this must have recurred in the period of crisis at the end of every year, just before Indra's victory was celebrated by the erection of his banner (see p. 129ff.). If at that time Varuṇa was again a true Asura of the primeval world, his "losing" that epithet in later times may possibly have been connected with the circumstance that the ancient seasonal ritual gradually lost its importance. Further research is needed to decide whether this suggestion is correct.

In close connection with the preceding remarks the often discussed contrast between Varuṇa and Indra, as elaborated in the hymns VII.82–85, may be briefly summarized[137]. The most significant detail is that Varuṇa

[137] See above, p. 25 and cf. Muir, Original Sanskrit Texts V (1874), p. 122ff. Hillebrandt, Varuṇa und Mitra, p. 102f., Renou, EVP. 7, p. 6, Bergaigne III, p. 118 (on II.27.14, where he says about Indra "son nom . . . ne figure que dans la formule

only very rarely is said to join Indra in the latter's fight. Only once are they jointly addressed as *vṛtraturā* (dual), "striking down obstacles" [138]. Varuṇa's epithet *samrāj*, as against Indra's title *svarāj* (VII.82.2), has often been commented upon [139]. In 82.4 and 83.5 the two gods are said to have power over goods of "both sorts" *(vásva ubháyasya)*. The word *ubháya* can refer to the two moieties, as in the stereotyped phrase, used with reference to Asuras and Devas, *ubháye Prājāpatyáḥ* "both of them sons of Prajāpati" (n. 23). The phrase has, therefore, been interpreted above as saying that since Indra has power over the goods of the upper world, and Varuṇa over those of the nether world, they conjointly have at their command all *vásu* of the world [140]. In 82.5 Mitra honours Varuṇa with peace *(kṣéma)* [141], while Indra drives about as a mighty one (details not clear). While 82.6 is insufficiently clear [142], 83.9 says that the one slays the *vṛtrāṇi* and the other watches over the *vratāni* (vows). A characteristic antithesis also occurs in 84.2: "May Varuṇa's wrath avoid us, may Indra give us space". The greatest blessing that is expected from Varuṇa is negative, his not striking men with his wrath. On the other hand there are indications in the Rigveda which justify the assumption that, apart from the cosmic and social aspects of Indra's *vṛtrahátya*, its religious importance was individually experienced as a break-through of *áṁhas*, a widening of consciousness [143]. In 84.4 we are told that the Āditya gets round (?) the *ánṛtā* (plural), whereas the hero distributes goods *(vásūni)* [144].

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de demande, et non dans la formule de déprécation"), and more in general III, p. 140ff., where also VI.68 (cf. Geldner, Vedische Studien 1, p. 142) is discussed. See further Dandekar, Cama Oriental Institute Golden Jubilee Volume (1969), pp. 237–248. For the hymns VII.82–85 see Renou, EVP. 5, pp. 99–102 (translation) and 7, pp. 81–87 (commentary). In the Atharvaveda Indra and Varuṇa are not (no longer?) mentioned conjointly, see Renou, Festgabe Lommel, p. 122f.

[138] See note 69.

[139] Dandekar, Cama Oriental Institute Golden Jubilee Volume (1969), p. 242f., holds that Varuṇa as a *samrāj* is superior to both Indra and Mitra. From the analysis of X.124.5 (above, p. 24f.) it follows that the relation between Indra and Varuṇa cannot simply be defined in terms of superiority.

[140] Sāyaṇa (ad VII.82.4): *divyasya pārthivasya ca vasuno, dhanasya* (cf. VII.83.5, VI.19.10). Against him Geldner: "Eher feindliches und eigenes". Renou: "Vous qui disposez d'un double bien-matériel", resp. "Puisque vous régissez l'un et l'autre biens (céleste et terrestre)." Cf. n. 126 and n. 23.

[141] See Renou, EVP. 7, p. 82 Cf., however, *dhruvákṣema* as an epithet of Mitra and Varuṇa (IIJ. 8, p. 109 n. 68).

[142] *ájāmim anyáḥ śnathāyantam átirad dabhrébhir anyáḥ prá vṛṇoti bhúyasaḥ*. Cf. Bergaigne III, p. 113, Renou, EVP. 5, p. 99 "recouvre", 7, p. 82f. "dieu bloqueur".

[143] For the nature of Varuṇa's blessing see Bergaigne III, p. 142 and cf. IIJ. 5, p. 52. Indra's *vṛtrahátya*, in so far as it has a bearing on the individual poet as the breaking of an inner obstruction and the opening of the well of inspiration, was discussed in IIJ. 4, p. 248. For a psychological evaluation of the experience of space see M. Lietaert Peerbolte, Psychic Energy (Wassenaar, 1975), p. 145f. The notion of *áṁhas*, discussed by J. Gonda, IIJ. 1, p. 33ff., might be considered in the light of Peerbolte's views.

[144] Cf. VII.65.3 (Mitra and Varuṇa) *tā́ bhūripāśāv ánṛtasya sétū*. Cf. Bergaigne, Rel. véd. III, p. 142, Renou, EVP. 7, p. 86.

In 85.3 the translation is not certain: "The one controls (? *dhārayati)* the chosen (?) people, the other breaks through the barriers *(vṛtrāṇi)* which do not offer resistance"[145]. Somewhat different is VI.68.3 "The one forcefully slays Vṛtra, the other accompanies (Indra?) as an inspired speaker"[146], which leaves the question open as to who is accompanied by Varuṇa. The god who is ordinarily expected to inspire the speaker is Agni[147], not the remote Varuṇa. This group of hymns is interesting because the Vasiṣṭhas, traditional Varuṇa-worshippers, have here tried to do full justice to the specific character of each of the two gods.

It is significant that the Rigvedic religious thinkers who thus defined the two gods in terms of a contrast were aware of the systematic character of their theology. The first Western scholar to follow them in this respect was Bergaigne. Almost a century ago he described Vedic mythology "comme un système achevé de toutes pièces" (Religion védique I [1878], p. III). He recognized the necessity of a "systématisation" (p. II) of the data and thus became the first exponent of a structural approach *avant la lettre*. In contrast with Geldner's evolutionistic theories, which were in conformity with the spirit of the age, Bergaigne interpreted the difference between Devas and Asuras as "une opposition née de la rencontre des deux conceptions unitaire et dualiste, sur l'ancienneté relative desquelles je n'ai d'ailleurs pas cru pouvoir me prononcer" (III, p. 142).

It is natural that some of Bergaigne's conclusions are no longer acceptable. This is especially true of the relation between "unitaire" (which he considered characteristic of the Asuras and Ādityas) and "dualiste" (which he rightly recognized in Indra). Such remarks as that about "les deux conceptions de la divinité entre lesquelles semble osciller la conscience religieuse des Aryas védiques" (III, p. 159) show that he regarded them as two coexisting conceptions. In fact, however, they characterized two successive stages of the cosmic process, viz. the undifferentiated primordial world and the dualistic cosmos (if it is permitted, for a moment, to reduce the complex state of things to an over-simplified formula). The antithesis as he put it is, therefore, only correct for the brief (presumably annual) period during which the original Asuras (who, in a way, were "jenseits des Guten und Bösen") and the Devas were again fighting for the supremacy over this world. As for the "dieux pères", however, the problem must be formulated in a different way. Bergaigne is right in describing Varuṇa and the "sovereign gods"

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[145] *kṛṣṭir anyó dhārāyati práviktā vṛtrāṇy anyó apratīni hanti*. For *práviktā* different interpretations have been proposed: "auserwählte" (Geldner, Renou, EVP. 7, p. 87), "(aux résidences) séparées" (Renou 5, p. 102), "erschreckt" (Hillebrandt, Lieder; similarly Oldenberg), "fortgesprungene (Grenze)" (Thieme). Cf. Eggeling, SBE. 44, p. xxii, Dandekar, Cama Or. Inst. Golden Jubilee Vol. (1969), p. 248, n. 26, P. Thieme, Kl. Schr. p. 254 n. 2.

[146] *vájreṇā 'nyáḥ śávasā hánti vṛtráṁ síṣakty anyó vṛjáneṣu víprah*. See Renou, EVP. 7, p. 80 (also on *vṛjáneṣu*).

[147] See IIJ. 4, p. 248ff.

as comprising within themselves the opposition of divine and demoniacal forces but, owing to his excluding the theological speculations of the brāhmaṇas from his study (vol. I, p. IV), he has overlooked the fact that, even in the Rigveda, the Ādityas did not stand apart in isolation but were incorporated in the system of the dualistic cosmos. In this world of order the original antithesis of Devas versus Asuras recurs in that of upper world versus underworld, the latter being impersonated by the Ādityas, the "Asuras among the gods" *(devānām ásurāḥ)*. In a way, therefore, the old antithesis of the formed versus the non-formed seems to reappear in the world of the formed. As for the Ādityas, this adds a new complication to their complex character, already recognized a century ago by Bergaigne.

7. THE ĀDITYAS III: THE RIGVEDA.

For many details concerning the Ādityas as a group it is sufficient to refer to the handbooks[148]. For the members of their group the texts give different numbers[149] but, in any case, they have always been considered a closed group, in contrast with the limitless Asuras[150]. When one Āditya is referred to, this is always Varuṇa. Two Ādityas refer to Varuṇa and Mitra, three to Varuṇa, Mitra and Aryaman.

In none of the handbooks, however, the place of the Ādityas in the pantheon is given due consideration[151]. From the oldest texts downwards the pantheon is considered to consist of three groups of gods, the Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas. There are a few other groups, which, however, are not included in this fundamental tripartite system. Many gods, such as Indra, Agni, Varuṇa, belong to one of the three groups. There are, besides, a few individual gods who, in some way or other, stand for the totality of the world and, accordingly, transcend this system. To them belongs Prajāpati and originally, it seems, Viṣṇu. It is significant that, when they are incorporated in the tripartite system, they are assigned to the group of Ādityas. Cf., e.g., Viṣṇu. The same, however, is true of Indra who in the brāhmaṇas is often counted among the Ādityas, although

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[148] See, e.g., Bergaigne III, p. 98ff., Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, p. 130, who disposes of the Ādityas in half a page (under the heading "Groups of Gods"), in contrast with, e.g. the Maruts (pp. 77–81).

[149] Seven according to Bergaigne III, p. 98, but see Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 87. For priestly speculations cf., e.g., MS. II.2.1 (15,2) *trír vaí saptá saptā 'dityáḥ*, KS. XI.6 (142,3) *trír vā Ādityās saptá sapta, yávanta evā 'dityās tān badhnāti;* for metrical speculations (eight Vasus: gāyatrī; eleven Rudras: tristubh; twelve Ādityas: jagatī), see Oldenberg, Kleine Schriften, p. 696 n. 2 and, e.g., the Vedic Concordance sub *vasavas tvā gāyatreṇa*. Different, again, is ŚB. XI.6.3.6; cf. also AB. VIII.12.4, JB. I.283,1, II.101,2,4,7.

[150] For the Asuras as an open group, see Oldenberg, "Varuṇa und die Ādityas", ZDMG. 50 (1896), p. 46 n. 3 (= Kleine Schriften, p. 691 n. 3); their number is legion: F. D. K. Bosch, The Golden Germ, p. 87 (on the Kauravas).

[151] See, e.g., Muir, Orig. Skt Texts V, p. 54ff., Oldenberg, l.c., pp. 43–68 (= Kleine Schriften, pp. 688–713), Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 87. The latter two were mainly concerned with the dispute on the Zoroastrian Ameša Spentas. Arbman's discussion (Rudra, p. 308) is unsatisfactory.

originally he was the leader of the Vasus. Other mythological figures, such as Tvaṣṭṛ, seem in fact to have belonged to the undifferentiated world. As will be shown below, the order in which the three groups were enumerated was fixed ever since the Rigveda.

For the present the true meaning of this remarkable tripartition must remain an open question. Here it can only be pointed out in passing that during the cosmogonical fight Indra, as the leader of the Vasus (note 153), with the help of the Rudras (=Maruts), gains the victory over the Asuras of the primordial world, as a result of which some of the last group join the Devas. The nature of the tripartition might thus be formalized as "Vasus-Rudras+Ādityas". It might be tempting to suggest that, owing to the ambiguous character of the Ādityas (which will be demonstrated in this chapter), they add a new dimension to the group of Vasus-Rudras. However, not before a much better insight has been gained into the nature of the Rudras, the most elusive of these groups, will it be possible to determine the relation between Vasus and Rudras.

Our task is more modest, viz. to answer the question how this tripartite system was fitted into the normal quadripartite system of classification, which turns clockwise from the East to the North. The Vasus are always associated with the East, the Rudras with the South and, with rare exceptions, the Ādityas with the West. The problem of finding a fourth group for the North has been solved in different ways, which will be discussed below.

The first question that arises is whether these fixed associations were due to the fixed order of the three groups (as is, no doubt, the case in some priestly speculations)[152] or if, inversely, the association was from the beginning a given fact and thus led to enumerating the groups in the order of the classification system. As far as I can see, the second alternative is correct because for Indra[153] and Agni[154], who were not only Vasus but even their leaders, only the association with the East is natural[155]. On the other hand, the connection of Varuṇa, the principal

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[152] Cf. the ascending order of metres (Gāyatrī = 8, Triṣṭubh = 11, Jagatī = 12), for which see above, n. 149; or the stereotyped ascending order of earth, air and sky (e.g., JB. II.141 see below, note 159, and ŚB. VI.1.2.10, see note 163).

[153] VII.10.4, 35.6, X.66.3. See below, p. 50.

[154] E.g., I.44.3 *Agníṁ purupriyám adyá dūtáṁ vṛṇīmahe Vásum*, I. 127.1 *Agníṁ hótāram manye dâsvantaṁ Vásuṁ sūnúṁ sáhaso jātávedasam*, V.51.13 *vaiśvānaró Vásur Agníḥ*. Cf. MS. III.4.2 (47,1) *Agnír vai Vásuḥ* and even in the epic, Mhbh. XII.122.31 *Vasiṣṭham īśaṁ viprāṇāṁ Vasūnāṁ jātavedasam* (viz. *vidadhe prabhum*).

[155] For the classification system the fact that both Indra and Agni belonged to the East (Indra: TS. II.4.14, guardian of the East; Bhar. NŚ. 3.23f., 5.95f., Purāṇas; Agni: cf., e.g., TS. I.8.7, ṢB. IV.4.9, ŚB., Gobh.GS., Mhbh., Rām.) created difficulties. Therefore, Agni is mostly associated with the Vasus and the East, while Indra is relegated to the South and functions as leader of the Rudras. The original identity of Rudras and Maruts (cf., e.g., III.32.3, X.32.5) and Indra's close connection with the Maruts may have contributed to this makeshift but do not explain it, as Agni was also connected with the Rudras (VII.5.9, VIII.103.14). Anyway, a

Āditya, with the setting sun and Death, shows that the relation of the Ādityas to the West was not arbitrary. In the light of the following material it is unexplainable how one of the greatest Vedic scholars could write that in the Rigveda the Vasus are not yet a separate class [156].

A second question is, whether the few exceptions in the Rigveda to this order (III.8.8, VII.35.14, X.66.12) prove that the order was not yet entirely fixed at that time. I think, such a conclusion would not be warranted. The poets were much freer in handling the traditional material of their religion than the systematic theologians of the brāhmaṇas, and that they made use of this freedom for prosodical purposes is apparent from a comparison of III.20.5 with III.8.8: whenever the nominative or vocative plural of *Vásu* was required, the poets of the family books preferred to put this after the caesura. Cf. III.8.8 *Ādityá Rudrá Vásavaḥ sunīthāḥ* (VII.35.14 *Ā. R. Vásavo juṣanta*, X.66.12 *Á. Rú. Vásavaḥ súdānavaḥ*) as against III.20.5 *Vásūn Rudrāṁ Ādityāṁ ihá huve*. Similarly in the genitive plural in X.48.11 *Ādityánāṁ Vásūnāṁ rudríyāṇām*. Only in the latest book we find in an irregular pāda (X.128.9) *Vásavo Rudrá Ādityá uparispṛśam*. A similar case is CII. III, p. 8, where Samudragupta is said to be *Dhanada-Varuṇe-ndrāntaka-sama* (sequence N.W.E.S.).

A third question concerns the exact relation of Indra to the three groups. As for X.48.11, where Indra says "I, as a Deva, do not infringe the law (?) of the Devas, viz. the Ādityas, Vasus and Rudriyas" [157], this would seem to stress the solidarity among the Devas (whatever *dhāman* may here mean) rather than to express a subordination of Indra to the totality of the three groups. Such an inferior rank of Indra cannot be inferred either from an isolated brāhmaṇa-passage, where Indra is said to have been later born than the Devas [158]. If any importance can be attached to this passage, "Devas" must here be a general term for the Devas Ādityas only (cf., e.g., X.65.9, 66.4). Such a cult legend as JB. II.141–142, where the Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas do not accept Indra's supremacy because they claim, as *jyeṣṭha*, to rank above him,

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makeshift it was. Elsewhere the East is assigned to Indra and the South-East to Agni (e.g., Hopkins, Epic Mythology p. 151. Gonda, JAOS. 87 [1967], p. 423b), e.g. in the Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra and the Purāṇas, while in the epics Agni is often located in the East (Hopkins, pp. 56, 104, 151). Indra's connection with the Vasus remains unaffected by the artificial solutions of the cosmic classification, cf. Mhbh. XIII.150.79 Bomb. ed. *sāvitrīm adhigamya Śakravasubhiḥ kṛtsnā jitā Dānavāḥ*. The derivative *vāsava*, an epithet of the name Indra in AS. VI.82.1 (see Bloomfield, SBE. 42, p. 95, Ludwig, Rigveda III, p. 470, etc.) becomes a name of the god in the epics.

[156] Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 387.

[157] *Ādityānāṁ Vásūnāṁ Rudrāṇāṁ devó devānāṁ ná mināmi dhāma*. The translation given above is Geldner's, but *dhāman* is a notorious crux. Cf. Gonda, Dhāman, p. 38f.: "Projections of the divinity of his colleagues."

[158] Cf. TS. II.3.4.2 *devánām ānujāvaráḥ*. But in the parallel version of KS. XI.4 (147,13) it is Bṛhaspati who is the *ānujāvaraḥ*. Cf. TS. V.5.9.5, where *devāḥ* in the classification system can only mean the *devá Ādityāḥ* (RS. X.65.9, 66.4, etc.).

may have arisen because of the necessity of justifying the *Vighana*-sacrifice [159].

In the Rigveda we find either the three groups of gods alone [160], or with their leaders, respectively Indra, Rudra and Varuṇa (or Aditi herself). If the poet gives a quadripartite classification, the fourth is either Bṛhaspati with the "singers" (= Aṅgirasas) or Tvaṣṭṛ. Although the Rigveda seldom refers to the system of classification *expressis verbis* (as the Atharvaveda does), there can be no doubt that this complementation of the triad was due to the need of adapting it to the cosmic classification (expressed, e.g., at VIII.28.3). The poets, however, were not systematic: sometimes only a single deity is mentioned in connection with three groups, such as Mitrā-Váruṇā or Agni (Indra in VS. 38.8).

The following is the material of the Rigveda: [161]

III.20.5 *Vásūn Rudrāṁ Ādityāṁ ihá huve*
(cf. TS. III.5.1.2 *V. R. Ā. ihá jinvatam*).

III.8.8 *Ādityā́ Rudrā́ Vásavaḥ sunīthā́*
dyā́vākṣā́mā pṛthiví́ antárikṣam

VII.35.14 *Ādityā́ Rudrā́ Vásavo juṣante*
'dám bráhma kriyámāṇaṁ návīyaḥ

X.66.12 *Ā́dityā Rúdrā Vásavaḥ súdānava*
imā́ bráhma śasyámānāni jinvata

X.66.4 *Áditir dyā́vāpṛthiví ṛtám mahád*
Índrāvíṣṇū Marútaḥ svàr bṛhát,
devā́ṁ Ādityā́ṁ ávase havāmahe
Vasū́n Rudrā́n Savitā́raṁ sudáṁsasam

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[159] Prajāpati, after creating the Vasus on earth, the Rudras in the air and the Ādityas in yonder world, creates Indra, for whom no room is left. Prajāpati then says "I have created thee for the highest respect and for the overlordship over them" *(eteṣāṁ tvā . . . śraiṣṭhyāyādhipatyāyā 'sṛkṣi)*. The gods do not accept this: "We, verily, are most esteemed, we are overlords because we are superior" *(vayaṁ vāva śreṣṭhā[s] smo, vayam adhipatayo ye jyeṣṭhā[s] sma iti nā 'jānan)*. Prajāpati then "sees" the Vighana-sacrifice and performs it for Indra, whereupon the latter slays all his enemies *(mṛdhaḥ)*. The normal situation would rather seem to be that Indra, as an *ádhipati* ("overlord"), meets the Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas (who are also overlords, see below VS. XIV.30, ŚB. VIII.4.3.16) on equal terms. He sometimes claims, it is true, to be *śreṣṭha* (PB. VII.8.2 *ahaṁ vaḥ śreṣṭho 'smi)* but in the light of the older mythology it is hard to determine what the mythological meaning of Indra's becoming a *śreṣṭho 'dhipatiḥ* may have been. With the *jyaiṣṭhyaṁ śraiṣṭhyam* of JB. II.67 cf., e.g., Śāṅkh. Ār. IX.8 *jyeṣṭhāya śreṣṭhāya svāhā*, TĀ. X.44, ŚB. XIV.9.3,4, AB. IV.25.7–9, etc.

[160] Variations are rare. In I.58.3 *Rudrébhir Vásubhiḥ* only two groups are mentioned. See also n. 166. The variation usually concerns the Rudras, who are replaced by another group, cf. VII.44.4 *Ādityébhir Vásubhir Áṅgirobhiḥ* (although, properly speaking, the Aṅgirasas are not gods, see n. 208), II.3.4 *ghṛténā 'ktáṁ Vasavaḥ sīdate 'dáṁ Víśve Devā́ Ādityā́ yajñíyāsaḥ*. Similarly AS. I.9.1: Vasus, Ādityas, Viśve Devāḥ.

[161] Cf. Arbman, Rudra, p. 157 n. 1.

The triad has been extended to four in:

VII.10.4 *Índraṁ no Agne Vásubhiḥ sajóṣā*
Rudráṁ Rudrébhir á vahā bṛhántam,
Ādityébhir Áditiṁ viśvájanyām
Bṛhaspátim ṛkvabhir viśvávāram

VII.35.6 *śáṁ no Índro Vásubhir devó astu*
śám Ādityébhir Váruṇaḥ suśáṁsaḥ,
śáṁ no Rudró Rudrébhir jálāṣaḥ
śáṁ nas Tváṣṭā gnábhir ihá śṛṇotu

X.66.3 *Índro Vásubhiḥ pári pātu no gáyam*
Ādityaír no Áditiḥ śárma yachatu,
Rudró Rudrébhir devó mṛḷayāti nas
Tváṣṭā no gnábhiḥ suvitáya jinvatu

X.125.1 *ahám Rudrébhir Vásubhiś carāmy*
ahám Ādityaír utá Viśvádevaiḥ,
ahám Mitrávaruṇo 'bhá bibharmy
ahám Indrāgní ahám Aśvíno 'bhá

This is the only place in the Rigveda where the Viśve Devas are introduced as a fourth group, which is sufficient to show the secondary character of this quadripartite system. In the family books they once take the place of the Rudras in II.3.4cd

ghṛténā 'ktáṁ Vasavaḥ sīdate 'dáṁ
Víśve Devā Ādityā yajñíyāsaḥ

The nature and the function of the Viśve Devāḥ are still obscure[162], although they were clearly connected with the idea of totality, cf. RS. I.89.10cd (= AS VS)

Víśve Devá Áditiḥ páñca jánā
Áditir jātám Áditir jánitvam

In the brāhmaṇas, where they often occur together with Bṛhaspati in the cosmic classification this character is still more perspicuous.

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[162] Caland's suggestion that they were the deified forefathers *(devāḥ pitáraḥ*, see Altindischer Ahnencult, p. 182f.) does not seem to be confirmed by the data, except Mhbh. V.107.3, XII.165.440* (see Sørensen). Nor are they "a factitious sacrificial group meant to represent all the gods" (Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, p. 130). For a recent discussion see Renou, EVP. 4, pp. 1–11. On the basis of X.65.11 he characterizes them as "une pluralisation anticipée de Prajāpati" (p. 9 n. 1). They are "impelled by Indra, commanded by Varuṇa" (X.66.2 *índraprasūtā váruṇapraśiṣṭāḥ*), which may indicate that they were connected with both upper and under world and thus represented aspects of both moieties (cf. n. 183). As this antithesis shows, the alternative translation of *prasūta* as "hervorgebracht" (H. P. Schmidt, Bṛhaspati und Indra, p. 129) cannot be correct, cf. also *vājaprasūta, háryaśvaprasūta*. For II.3.4, where the Viśve Devāḥ take the place of the Rudras, see note 160. I doubt if Renou is right (pp. 3,8) in taking *víśve Vásavaḥ, víśve Marútaḥ* and *víśve Ādityáḥ* as standing for the *Víśve Devāḥ*.

Only Agni or the dual group Mitrā́váruṇā is mentioned in connection with the three groups in the following stanzas:

X.150.1 *sámiddhaś cit sám idhyase*
devébhyo havyavāhana,
Ādityaí Rudraír Vásubhir na á gahi
mṛḷīkáya na á gahi

II.31.1 *asmákam Mitrāvaruṇā 'vataṁ rátham*
Ādityaí Rudraír Vásubhiḥ sacābhúvā,

the second pāda of which recurs in the hymn to the Aśvins:

VIII.35.1 *Agníné 'ndreṇa Váruṇena Viṣṇunā*
'dityaí Rudraír Vásubhiḥ sacābhúvā,
sajóṣasā Uṣásā Sū́ryeṇa ca
sómam pibatam Aśvinā.

Finally the three groups occur once in the Rigveda in a very special context in VIII.101.15, where Aditi is said to be the daughter of the Vasus, the sister [!] of the Ādityas and the mother of the Rudras. The poet can hardly have meant (in spite of X.48.11, discussed above, p. 48) that *all* Devas descended from the primordial world, just like the Ādityas, sons of Aditi[163]. At best he may have referred to the relationship that existed between the Devas, as "younger brothers" of the Asuras, and the World Mother, who was the female manifestation of the Father Asura in the primordial world (where male and female were still interchangeable as a consequence of its undifferentiated state), before she, like the Ādityas, became part of the dual world and thus gave rise to Diti as her counterpart among the banished Asuras[164].

It must be admitted, however, that what can be inferred from the texts about the origin of the Devas is very vague and it may be questioned if the Rigvedic poets themselves had clear-cut ideas on this point. This is particularly true of Indra. In the Vedic myth his appearance in the undifferentiated world had an irrational character and it is not surprising

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[163] A different idea occurs in ŚB. VI.1.2.10. Here Prajāpati first creates Agni and the Vasus, who are located on earth, then Vāyu and the Rudras in the air, thereupon the Sun and the Ādityas in the sky, and finally the Moon and the Viśve Devāḥ in the quarters *(díśas)*, which again points to an association with cosmic totality. Cf. also AS. I.9.1 (Vasus, Ādityas, Viśve Devāḥ).

[164] For references see Indol. Studies — W. Norman Brown, p. 146 n. 59 and further Max Müller, Hymns to the Maruts (1869), pp. 230–251 (cf. SBE. 32 [1891], pp. 241–263), J. Muir, Original Sanskrit Texts V (1874), pp. 35–53, Oppert, ZDMG. 57 (1903), pp. 508–519, H. Güntert, Der arische Weltkönig und Heiland (1923), p. 201ff. Heinrich Zimmer, Eranos Jahrbuch 6 (1938), pp. 175–220, L. Buschardt, Vṛtra, Det rituelle Dæmondrab (1945), p. 97f. Aditi must have "gone over" like Varuṇa, but she represents the dual cosmos in its totality. She knows "both worlds" (KS. XXIII.8: 83,19 *aham evemā ubhau lokau veda*, KKS. XXXVI.5: 191,23/223,14. *aham evemau*). Hence her being *ubhayátaḥśīrṣṇī*? (different explanations at ŚB. III.2.4.16, TS. VI.1.7.5, MS. III.7.5: 82.1). As *devī́* she is opposed to the Asuras (MS. IV.2.3: 24,17 *Áditir devéṣv ásīt, Kústā 'sureṣu*). The banished Asuras got Diti for their mother (A. B. Keith, Religion and Philosophy, p. 217f.).

that the Rigvedic references to his mother (VIII.77.1–2, etc.) are very vague. In the light of such reflections it would seem very doubtful that originally Indra was regarded as the last-born son Aditi, as he is sometimes represented in the Yajurveda (but see n. 96). Since the scarce evidence leaves too much room for subjective interpretations, no decision is possible. The stanza reads as follows:

mātā́ Rudráṇām duhitā́ Vásūnāṁ
svásā 'dityā́nām amṛ́tasya nā́bhiḥ,
prá nu vocaṁ cikitúṣe jánāya
mā́ gā́m ánāgām Áditiṁ vadhiṣṭa.

8. THE ĀDITYAS IV: OTHER VEDIC TEXTS.

In the brāhmaṇas, too, the three groups Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas occur. In the Black Yajurveda the earth, identified with Aditi, is said to be the seat *(sádas)* of the three classes of gods [165], and the *somakrāyaṇī*-cow is addressed with the words "You are a Vasvī, a Rudrā, Aditi, an Ādityā . . ." [166].

The problem of how to extend this system by a fourth group is solved in different ways, depending on whether a fifth group is added for the centre or not. Thus the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa follows the tradition of RS. X.125.1 by adding the Viśve Devas with Bṛhaspati [167]. As for the Yajurveda, in one passage of the Taittirīya Saṁhitā and the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa the same extension is found but here it can be shown to be

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[165] MS. IV.1.13 (18, 6ff.) *iyáṁ vā́ Áditir, asyā́m evainam asīṣadad, Vásūnāṁ Rudrā́ṇām Ādityā́nāṁ sádo 'sīty, etā́ vā́ etā́m ágre devátām abhyàjayaṁs, tā́bhya evainat sádaḥ karoti*, KS. XXXI.10 (13,4), KKS. XLVII.10 (294,11/345,20) *Vásūnāṁ Rudrā́ṇām Ādityā́nāṁ sádanam asi 'ti, yā́ evā́ devátā abhyàjayaṁs tā́bhya enat sádanaṁ karoti.* Cf. MS. I.1.12 (7,16), KS. I.11 (6,10), KKS. I.11 (8,9), Vedic Concordance, p. 850a, B. Geiger, Die Amәša Spәntas, p. 205.

[166] TS. I.2,5, VI.1.8.1, ĀpŚS. X.22.11 *Vásvy asi, Rudrā́ 'sy, Áditir asy, Ādityā́ 'si śukrā́ 'si, candrā́ 'si.* Caland's translation "Die Gute bist du" for *vásvy asi* (Āpastamba Śrautasūtra, l.c.) is a slip of the mind. In this connection the question may be asked whether (in spite of the fact that the Aśvins are a dual deity, which RS. X.125.1 puts on a par with Mitrā́váruṇā and Indrāgnī) the words *vásū Rudrā́ purumā́ntū* directed to them (I.158.1) do mean "Gut sind die beiden Rudras" (Geldner). Since I.58.3 *Rudrébhir Vásubhir* (n. 160) refers to the two classes and VII.59.8 *Maruto . . . Vasavo* means "O Maruts . . . O Vasus" (Geldner, Renou) it is more likely that the Aśvins are referred to as "the Vasu and the Rudra with many thoughts" (cf. Renou, EVP. 16, p. 24). That there is a structural contrast between the twins has been demonstrated (convincingly in my opinion) by Stig Wikander, "Nakula et Sahadeva", Orientalia Suecana 6 (1957), pp. 66–96.

[167] AB. I.24.4 *te devā́ abibhayur: asmākaṁ vipremāṇam anv idam asurā ābhaviṣyantī 'ti. te vyutkramyā́ 'mantrayantā́, 'gnir Vasubhir udakrāmad, Indro Rudrair, Varuṇa Ādityair, Bṛhaspatir Viśvair Devaiḥ*, JB. I.283 *Vasavo gāyatrīṁ samabharan . . . Rudrā́s triṣṭubhaṁ samabharan . . . Ādityā́ jagatīṁ samabharan . . . Sādhyā́ś cā́ 'ptyā́ś cā́ 'nuṣṭubhaṁ samabharan.* For Bṛhaspati cf. RS. IV.50.6 *pitré viśvádevāya* and see H.-P. Schmidt, Bṛhaspati und Indra, p. 218. In general cf. Bergaigne II, pp. 114–156 ("arithmétique mythologique").

secondary[168]. The passage of the AB. is interesting because parallel versions occur in the Black Yajurveda. The tale contains an aetiological myth which explains the system of classification from a quarrel that once arose among the Devas, while they were fighting against the Asuras. Because no group was willing to accept another group's superiority *(śrî, śraiṣṭhya, jyaiṣṭhya)*, they split into four (or five) separate groups, which dispersed into the four directions[169]. In one version of the Yajurveda the Maruts, who in the Rigveda are identical with the Rudras[170], have been split off as a separate group, which here takes the place of the Viśve Devas. Although in other passages the normal order is preserved[171], in this version Ādityas and Maruts have changed places, for which I cannot offer an explanation[172].

More normal, however, is that the Maruts are located in the North when five groups are distinguished. In that case the Viśve Devāḥ are located in the centre, symbolizing the totality. This is found in the Taittirīya Saṁhitā, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa[173]. In this centre, however, the dualism recurs in the vertical opposition of

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[168] TS. III.5.6.2 *Vásubhyo Rudrébhya Ādityébhyo Viśvebhyo vo Devébhyaḥ pannéjanīr gṛhṇāmi*, TB. II.2.10.5–6 *tắṁ devắḥ samantắṁ páryaviśan, Vásavaḥ purástāt, Rudrắ dakṣiṇatắḥ, Ādityắḥ paścắt, Viśve Devắ uttaratắḥ, Áṅgirasaḥ pratyáñcam* (6) *Sādhyắḥ párāñcam* (S. Lévi, Doctrine du sacrifice, p. 73). That the Viśve Devāḥ have later been added, appears from the parallel versions MS. I.3.1, (29,10), KS. III.9 (28,4), KKS. II.16 (24,8/29,4) *Vásūnāṁ Rudrắṇām Ādityắnāṁ pannéjanīḥ stha, Vásavo Rúdrā Ắdityā etá vaḥ pannéjanīḥ*. There are more instances of such an extension of a formula in TS., cf. IV.3.10.3 (VS. XIV.30, ŚB.VIII.4.3.16) *dyávāpṛthivî vyaìtām ... Vásavo Rudrắ Ādityắ anuvyàyaṁs, tá evắ 'dhipataya āsan*, as against MS. II.8.6 (110.19), KS. XVII.5 (349,4) *Vásavo Rudrắ anuvyàyan*.

[169] It may be noted that the five groups of gods fighting against the Asuras can mythologically be paralleled to the five Pāṇḍavas (four of whom go to the four quarters during the *digvijaya*, Mhbh. II.23–29) waging war against the countless Kauravas (G. J. Held, The Mahābhārata, F. D. K. Bosch, The Golden Germ).

[170] See Arbman, Rudra, p. 14, n. 3. The name Rudras does not occur in books IV and VI of the Rigveda.

[171] MS. IV.1.10 (13,14) *ásurāṇāṁ vắ iyáṁ pṛthivy âsīt. té devắ abruvan: dattá no 'syắḥ pṛthivyắ iti. té vai svayám evá brūdhvam* (read *evắ 'varuddhvam*) *iti. táto vai Vásavaḥ prắcīṁ díśam údajayan, Rudrắ dákṣiṇām, Ādityắḥ pratîcīṁ, Marúta údīcīm*.

[172] MS. II.2.6 (19,13), III.7.10 (90,1) *devắ anyò 'nyásya śraíṣṭhyé 'tiṣṭhamānā* (emendation of *śrîṣṭe, ścaiṣṭhye tiṣṭhamānā*, von Schroeder, edition Aundh) *caturdhắ vyúdakrāman, Agnir Vásubhiḥ, Sómo Rudraír, Índro Marúdbhir, Váruṇa Ādityaís. tắn vắ eténa Bṛhaspátir ayājayat ... táto devắ ábhavan, párā 'surāḥ*, KS. XXIV.9 (100,3), KKS. XXXVIII.2 (206,1/240,10) *devā vā anyo'nyaśraiṣṭhyāya* (KS. *anyo-'nyasya*) *nātiṣṭhanta. te caturdhā vyudakrāmann, Agnir Vasubhis, Somo Rudrair, Indro Marudbhir, Varuṇa Ādityais. te devā pāpīyāṁso 'bhavan, vasīyāṁso 'surās. te 'viduḥ: pāpīyāṁso vai tye bhavanti, vasīyāṁso 'surā iti*.

[173] TS. VI.2.2.1 *devāsurắḥ sáṁyattā āsan, té devắ mithó vípriyā āsan. tè 'nyò'nyásmai jyaíṣṭhyāyắ 'tiṣṭhamānāḥ pañcadhắ vy àkrāmann, Agnír Vásubhiḥ, Sómo Rudraír Índro Marúdbhir, Váruṇa Ādityaír Bṛhaspátir Viśvair Devaís ...*, ŚB. VIII.6.3.3 (about the Gārhapatya) *tám ihà 'hṛtyó 'pādadhata, tásmin vyàvadanta, Vásavaḥ purástād,Rudrắ dakṣiṇatắ, Ādityắḥ paścắn, Marúta uttarató, Viśve Devắ upáriṣṭāt ...*, Gop. Br. II.2.2 *pañcadhā vai devā vyudakrāmann, Agnir Vasubhiḥ, Somo Rudrair, Indro Marudbhir, Varuṇa Ādityair, Bṛhaspatir Viśvair Devais. te devā abruvann asurebhyo vā idaṁ bhrātṛvyebhyo radhyāmo yan mitho vipriyā smo ...*

the zenith versus the nadir, corresponding with the top and the bottom of the cosmic axis, and with the upper versus the nether world respectively. When this distinction is made, Bṛhaspati is often located "above" *(upáriṣṭāt)*, that is, in the zenith[174]. This place he shares with Savitṛ, whom he seems to have ousted in the course of time[175]. In later texts, such as the Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra and the Purāṇas, this place is attributed to Brahmā[176]. By the side of the ŚB. passage mentioned above there is another one in the same text which polemizes against the introduction of the Viśve Devāḥ. This passage is mainly interesting because it seems to show that its author no longer understood the idea of a totality which is more than the sum total of its components[177].

In connection with Bṛhaspati's place in the zenith a brief digression may here be inserted. In the Brāhmaṇas, just as well as in the Saṁhitās, it is characteristic of the Ādityas, and particularly of their leader Varuṇa, that they only very rarely take part in the fight of the other Devas against the Asuras[178]. One of the exceptions is a passage in the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa which tells that the Asuras fled with the essence and power of the *savanas* (pressings) into the darkness and that Indra won back one third with help of Varuṇa, one third with Bṛhaspati, and one third with Viṣṇu[179].

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[174] ŚB. V.1.1.4 *eṣò 'rdhvá Bṛhaspáter díg ity evà 'huḥ* "They say that the upper region belongs to Bṛhaspati." From JB II.25,3, where Bṛhaspati is mentioned conjointly with Prajāpati in the description of the *rājāsandī*, it does not follow that Bṛhaspati had some traits in common with Prajāpati. Cf. AB. VII.12.3 and 17.2, where Bṛhaspati is associated with Savitṛ.

[175] See Hanns-Peter Schmidt, Bṛhaspati und Indra, p. 88f.

[176] Bṛhaspati in the zenith, as opposed to Viṣṇu in the nadir, is already found in the Atharvaveda, see below, p. 56. That this may be interpreted as upper world versus nether world may be inferred from AS. IV.40.5–7, where in the centre are located Earth, Vāyu and Sūrya. See in general for the system of classification E. W. Hopkins, Epic Mythology, p. 149ff., Mhbh. VIII.30.76–77, V.106–110, XIII.100.11, Rām. II.14,321*, etc., A. K. Coomaraswamy, Yaksas II, p. 31, Thérèse de Mallmann, L'iconographie de l'Agnipurāṇa, p. 124ff. (table on p. 127), whose material, in so far as it has been taken from J. N. Banerjea, The Development of Hindu Iconography, p. 520 n. 1, is useful but not always reliable: the latter's reconstruction of the classification on the basis of Manu V.96 is incorrect. Banerjea's book itself was not accessible to me. For Brahmā in the zenith, as opposed to Ananta (= Śeṣa, Viṣṇu's snake) or Vāsuki in the nadir, see de Mallmann, pp. 56, 96 (who refers to Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra and the Purāṇas). See n. 195.

[177] ŚB. III.4.2.1 *átithyéna vaí devá iṣṭvá, tánt samád avindat. té caturdhá vyàdravann anyò'nyásya śriyá átiṣṭhamānā, Agnír Vásubhiḥ, Sómo Rudraír, Váruṇa Ādityaír, Índro Marúdbhir, Bṛhaspátir Víśvair Devaír ity u haika āhur eté há tv èvá té Víśve Devá yé té caturdhá vyádravaṁs. tán vidrutān asurarakṣasány anuvyáveyuḥ* (2) *tè 'viduḥ pāpīyāṁso vaí bhavāmo, asurarakṣasāni vaí no 'nuvyávāguḥ.*

[178] For the view that the Ādityas were fighting the Dānavas (Jean Varenne, Di alcuni miti cosmogonici del Ṛg-Veda, Torino 1969, p. 12) I find little support in the texts (see n. 223). MS. II.2.1 (15,5) *Ādityá vá aparoddhāraḥ*, KS. XI.6 (151,4) *Ādityá vai trātāra, Ādityá aparoddhāraḥ* only conceal the existing fear of Varuṇa's wrath. But see also p. 76 and n. 223.

[179] AB. III.49.1, 50.1–3 *agniṣṭomaṁ vai devā aśrayanto, 'kthāny asurās, te samāvadvīryā evā 'san . . . te vā asurā Maitrāvaruṇasyo 'ktham aśrayanta. so 'bravīd Indraḥ: kaś cā 'haṁ ce 'mān ito 'surān notsyāvahā ity. ahaṁ ce 'ty abravīd Varuṇaḥ . . .*,

In view of the characteristic association of Viṣṇu with the third part (as in Jaim. Brāhmaṇa II.243, where Indra is said to get two parts of Vṛtra's *indriyaṁ vīryam*, but Viṣṇu the third), it has been argued that, if Viṣṇu here represents the totality of the cosmos, Varuṇa is likely to stand for the nether world and Bṛhaspati for the upper world[180]. The reason for choosing Bṛhaspati as the representative of the upper world, in spite of his later ambiguous character (n. 361), may have been his place in the system of classification[181].

In spite of the criticism by one author of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa there can be no doubt that a system which divided the universe into five regions belonged to the old tradition of the Yajurveda. In a list which gives for each region its mythical name, the name of its "overlord" *(ádhipati)* and that of the "arrester of the arrows" *(hetīnáṁ pratidhartṛ)*, we find in MS. II.8.9, KS. XVII.8, KKS. XXVI.7 and TS. IV.4.2.1ff.:

East: name Rā́jñī, overlords: Vásus, arrester: Agní.
South: resp. Virā́j, Rudrás, Índra (KKS.: Sóma).
West: resp. Samrā́j, Ādityás, Sóma [!] (KKS. Índra).
North: resp. Svarā́j, Marúts (TS.: Víśve Devā́ḥ), Váruṇa [!].
Zenith: resp. Ádhipatnī, Víśve Devā́ḥ (TS.: Marúts), Bṛ́haspáti.

The Taittirīya Saṁhitā is consistent in associating the Viśve Devas with the North (see n. 168), although the combination of them with Varuṇa (as in TS. IV.3.3.2) is sufficient to prove the secondary character of this system. All the texts of the Black Yajurveda, however, concur in locating Varuṇa in the North (but cf. MS. II.7.20: 105, 12). Here the White Yajurveda has a more logical (although not necessarily textually older) division. Cf. VS. XV.10–14, ŚB. VIII.6.1,5ff.:

JB. I. 179–180 *devāsurā yajñe 'spardhanta. te devā asurān yajñān niravāghnan. te 'surās trayāṇāṁ savanānāṁ rasaṁ vīryaṁ pravṛhyā 'ndhaṁ tamaḥ prāviśan. yad dha vai kiṁ ca parācīnam agniṣṭomāt tad andhaṁ tamaḥ. yat parācīnaṁ saṁvatsarāt tad andhaṁ tamaḥ. etāvān vāva yajño yāvān agniṣṭomaḥ. etāvān u saṁvatsaraḥ. dvādaśa vā agniṣṭomasya stotrāṇi, dvādaśa māsās saṁvatsaraḥ. dvādaśa stotrāṇi, dvādaśa śastrāṇi. dvādaśa pūrvapakṣā dvādaśā 'parapakṣāḥ. atha yat tataḥ parācīnaṁ tad andhaṁ tamaḥ. tat prāviśat. te devā asurān anvabhyavāyan. tān asurān etair evo 'kthaiḥ pratyudatiṣṭhan. yad ukthaiḥ pratyudatiṣṭhaṁs tad ukthānām ukthatvam. tāṁs tato nir evā 'vāghnan. te 'ndhaṁ tamaḥ prāviśan, rātrim eva. sa Indro 'bravīt kaś cā 'haṁ ce 'dam anvabhyavaiṣyāva iti.* [180] *ahaṁ ce 'ty abravīd Varuṇaḥ. ahaṁ vāṁ jyotir dhārayiṣyāmī 'ty Agnir abravīt* . . . Cf. also JB. III.104, where Varuṇa helps the Devas.

[180] See Indological Studies–W. Norman Brown, pp. 145, 150. Varuṇa was there explained as standing for the Asuras, which is inaccurate (p. 150). He acts as a *devá ásura* (= *Āditya*) of the dualistic cosmos, the Asuras themselves standing outside the world of order. Varuṇa, although associated with the West in the classification system, was thought of as residing below *(adhástāt)*. Cf. TS. V.5.9.5, as interpreted below, n. 183, and IIJ.8, p. 108. For the general problem of the difference between function and place in the classification see IIJ. 13, p. 283.

[181] The role of this system appears in Gopatha Brāhmaṇa II.4.11, where Agni, Varuṇa, Bṛhaspati and Viṣṇu may stand for the main opposition in the horizontal plane (Agni: East, life, light, etc. versus Varuṇa: West, death, darkness, etc.) and for the vertical opposition (Bṛhaspati: zenith, Viṣṇu: nadir) but Indra's place in between remains to be explained.

East: name: Rājñī, *adhip.*: Vásus, *pratidh.*: Agní.
South: resp. Virāj, Rudrás, Índra.
West: resp. Samrāj, Ādityás, Váruṇa.
North: resp. Svarāj, Marúts, Sóma.
Zenith: resp. Ádhipatnī, Víśve Devāḥ, Bṛhaspáti.

As an illustration of the many variations that occur in details the following table gives a synopsis of the data of two Atharvavedic passages (III.27.1–6, XII.3.55–60), compared with two Yajurvedic texts (MS. II.13.21, TS. V.5.10.1–2). They give for each region its mythical name, its overlord *(ádhipati)*, its "defender" *(rakṣitṛ)* and its arrows (only in the AS.):

	East:	*South:*	*West:*	*North:*
AS. name	Prācī	Dákṣiṇā	Pratīcī	Ūdīcī
overlord	Agní [182]	Índra	Váruṇa	Sóma
defender	Asitá	Tiraścirāji	Pṛdāku	Svajá
arrows	Ādityāḥ [!] (but XII: Ādityáḥ)	Pitáras [183]	ánnam	áśani
MS. name	Samīcī	Ojasyà	Prācī [!]	Suṣádā
overlord	Agní	Índra	Sóma [!]	Váruṇa [!]
defender	Asitá	Tiraścīnarāji	Svajá	Sṛdāgu, v.l. Sṛdāku
TS. name	Samīcī	Ojasvínī	Prācī [!]	Avasthāvan [184]
overlord	Agní	Índra	Sóma [!]	Váruṇa [!]
defender	Asitá	Pṛdāku [!]	Svajá	Tiráścarāji

	Zenith	*Nadir*
AS. name	Ūrdhvá	Dhruvá
overlord	Bṛhaspáti	Víṣṇu
defender	Śvitrá	Kalmāṣagrīva
arrows	varṣám	vīrúdhaḥ [185]

[182] But AS. XVIII.3.25: East: Indra and Maruts, South: Dhātṛ, West: Aditi, North: Soma.

[183] Taboo may have been the main reason why the *Pitáras* are but seldom mentioned in the system of classification in connection with the region that is characteristically theirs. They belong, indeed, to the cosmos (see above, p. 12). When they are included in the system, the Rudras are shifted to the East, cf. TS. V.5.9.4 *Vásavas tvā Rudraíḥ purástāt pāntu, pitáras tvā yamárājānaḥ pitṛbhir dakṣiṇatáḥ pāntv, Ādityás tvā Víśvair Devaíḥ paścāt pāntu, Dyutānás tvā mārutó Marúdbhir uttaratáḥ pātu* (5) *devás tvé 'ndrajyeṣṭhā váruṇarājāno 'dhástāc copáriṣṭāc ca pāntu.* Cf. VS. XXXVIII.9 (below, p. 61). The term *devāḥ* here seems to denote the *Víśve Devāḥ*. For a parallel see above, n. 158. The phrase *índrajyeṣṭhā váruṇarājānaḥ* refers to the cosmic dualism, since Indra and Varuṇa are regularly opposed to each other. Moreover, in RS. X.66.2 similar epithets are used for the Viśve Devāḥ, which may lead to the conclusion that they transcend the dualistic contrasts of this world (n. 162). It is tempting, then, to interpret this TS. passage in the same manner, the more so as here the contrast is indicated *expressis verbis* by the words *adhástāt* and *upáriṣṭāt*, denoting the nadir and the zenith. In this vertical opposition, corresponding to top and bottom of the world axis, Varuṇa belongs, indeed, to the lower end of the axis, the roots of the world tree. See n. 180

[184] Cf. ASPaipp. II.56.4, MS. II.13.21 (167,8) *avasthā́*.

[185] Thus also the Paippalāda version of XII.3, where the Śaunaka version has *óṣadhīḥ*.

MS. name	Ádhipatnī	Avasthā́
overlord	Bṛ́haspáti	Víṣṇu
defender	Citrá [186]	Kalmā́ṣagrīva
TS. name	Ádhipatnī	Vaśínī
overlord	Bṛ́haspáti	Yamá
defender	Śvitrá	Kalmā́ṣagrīva

The normal term for the zenith in the Yajurveda is *bṛhatī dík* "the high region" [187], perhaps with assonance of Bṛhaspati. Only MS. has *ūrdhvā́ dík*. The nadir is sometimes called *dhruvā́ dík* "the fixed region" (TS. *iyáṁ dík*), the term for the centre in general.

In addition to the VS.-passage quoted on p. 56 another may be mentioned where the White Yajurveda seems also to have preserved (this time in agreement with the Maitr. version of the Black Yajurveda) the old combination of three groups of gods. This is the passage dealing with the partition of the vertebrae of the sacrificial horse [188]. The parallel versions of KS. and TS. here add the Aṅgirasas, Sādhyas and Viśve Devas, which is no doubt a secondary extension of the original grouping [189].

A very elaborate form of the Vedic classification, which may be mentioned in conclusion, occurs in JB. II.142. After Indra has slain all his enemies, the gods *(sarve devāḥ)* sit down around him [190] in a ceremonial manner, which is called *daivī sabhā* or *daivī saṁsád* (TS. VII.4.2.1f.) and reproduces the system of classification, viz. in the East the Vasus, in the South the Rudras, in the West the Ādityas, in the North the Maruts, in the zenith *(upariṣṭāt)* the Viśve Devas, in the nadir *(adhastāt)* the Sādhyas [191] and Āptyas, and round about *(abhitaḥ)* the Aṅgirasas.

9. THE ĀDITYAS V: LATER TEXTS

In the "ideal" ceremonial grouping of the gods in the passage just quoted the Aṅgirasas stand more or less outside the system. They were,

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[186] Probably a misreading, according to Whitney ad AS. III.27.6. The new Indian edition (by Viśvabandhu) reads *śvitró*, but Paipp. III.24,6 has *citro*.

[187] *bṛhatī dík* does not mean "the great quarter" (Keith, H.O.S. 19, p. 449).

[188] MS. III.15.6 (179,7), VS. XXV.6 *Viśveṣā́ṁ Devā́nāṁ prathamā́ kī́kasā, Rudrā́ṇāṁ dvitī́yā, 'dityā́nāṁ tr̥tī́yā.*

[189] KSA. XIII.7, TS. V.7.17 *Vásūnāṁ prathamā́ kī́kasā, Rudrā́ṇāṁ dvitī́yā, 'dityā́nāṁ tr̥tī́yā, 'ṅgirasāṁ caturthī́, Sādhyā́nāṁ pañcamī́, Viśveṣā́ṁ Devā́nāṁ ṣaṣṭhī́.* The curious insertion of the Aṅgirasas (after the Ādityas) may possibly be due to the close connection between these groups, to be discussed below, section 10.

[190] *taṁ vijigyānaṁ sarve devā abhitas samantaṁ paryaviśan.* For this ceremony cf., e.g., KS. X.7 (132,16), TS. II.4.1.2 *samantáṁ devā́n páry aviśan*, TB. II.2.10.5 *táṁ devā́ḥ samantáṁ páryaviśan*, MS. III.8.6 (102,18). For *sarve*, cf. MS. II.8.9 (114,11), KS. XVII.8 (251,19), KKS. XXVI.7 (110,1/128,3), TS. IV.4.2.3, where a classificatory enumeration is concluded with the words *té tvā sárve saṁvidānā́ nákasya pr̥ṣṭhé suvargé loké yájamānaṁ ca sādayantu.* Cf. Keith, Religion and Philosophy p. 213 n. 2, Renou, EVP. 4, p. 3.

[191] The proper place of the Sādhyas was *upáriṣṭāt* (see n. 192), in contrast with the Āptyas, who were *adhástāt*. They were always located in the centre. See further p. 242ff.

indeed, mythical forefathers but, properly speaking, no gods, and in the system of the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa they have been introduced as a kind of appendix, at the end of the list of gods.

In this way they are also added when groups of gods are enumerated without a direct reference to the system of classification. In those cases the authors were freer and could add the Aṅgirasas as a last member of the series, without necessarily implying that the Aṅgirasas belonged to the cosmic centre[192]. The Maruts, too, are sometimes mentioned after (instead of before) the Viśve Devas[193] but since these two groups were both used to complement the older system of three groups, variation in their respective order is not unnatural. However, the variation found in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, where not only the Aṅgirasas but also the Maruts occur at the very end of the list, after the Sādhyas and Āptyas[194], is rather uncommon. The result is that the Viśve Devas are located in the North, but the Maruts and Aṅgirasas in the zenith[195]. Only a systematic study of all classifications occurring in the brāhmaṇas could show to what extent particular variations are peculiarities of a single work. Thus the rare occurrence of the Viśve Devas in the classifications of the Atharvaveda (only XVIII.3.25–29?)[196] would seem an individual feature of that Saṁhitā.

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[192] As an instance may be quoted TS. VII.1.18 *Vásubhir devébhir devátayā ... Rudrébhir devébhir devátayā ... Ādityébhir devébhir devátayā ... Víśvebhir Devébhir devátayā ... Áṅgirobhir devébhir devátayā.* A difficulty in any attempt to explain such variations is the impossibility of determining to what extent they may simply have been due to the personal idiosyncrasies of an individual priest or to mere differentiations between various schools, and how far they are essential, as expressions of divergent theological speculations. The Aṅgirasas are sometimes associated with the nadir (cf. Vādhūla Sūtra, Acta Or. 6, p. 130 *Aṅgiraso 'dhastāt, Sādhyā upariṣṭāt*), but more often with the zenith. See n. 215.

[193] JB. II.25, lines 5–6, III.152 (in connection with the "King's throne" *(rājāsandī)*: *Vasavo rājyāya, Rudrā vairājyāyā, 'dityā svārājyāya* (sic !), *Viśve Devās sāmrājyāya, Marutas sārvavaśyāya, Sādhyāś cā 'ptyāś ca pārameṣṭhyāya.*

[194] AB. VIII.12.4 *Vasavas ... sāmrājyāya. Rudrās ... bhaujyāyā, 'dityās ... svārājyāya, Viśve ... Devā ... vairājyāya, Sādhyāś ca tvā 'ptyāś ca devāḥ ... rājyāya, Marutaś ca ... Aṅgirasaś ca devā ... pārameṣṭhyāya māhārājyāyā 'dhipatyāya svāvaśyāyā 'tiṣṭhāya ...*

[195] AB. VIII.14.1–4 East: Vasus, South: Rudras, West: Ādityas, North: Viśve Devāḥ, *asyāṁ dhruvāyāṁ madhyamāyāṁ pratiṣṭhāyāṁ diśi:* Sādyas and Āptyas, *ūrdhvāyāṁ diśi:* Maruts and *Aṅgiraso devāḥ.* For the Angirasas this location is not unparalleled: cf. Maitrī Upaniṣad VII.1–5, where the zenith is assigned to Mitra-Varuṇa and the Aṅgirasas, which conception cannot be old, the less so, as the North is assigned to Varuṇa alone. The Maitr. Up. is interesting in that it locates Śani with the snakes in the nadir. See n. 176.

[196] East: Indra marutvat, South: Dhātṛ, West: Aditi with the Ādityas, North: Soma with the Viśve Devāḥ; further Dhartṛ and Savitṛ, apparently in the nadir and the zenith respectively (see above, p. 54 for Savitṛ). As for Dhartṛ who, in that case, is at the bottom of the world axis and supports it, see H.-P. Schmidt, Bṛhaspati und Indra, pp. 88f., and cf. IIJ. 13, p. 283. Some places where the system seems to have been abandoned are AS. XIX.17.1–9, KS. XXXVI.15 (83,11), which gives Agni, Indra, Viśve Devāḥ and Prajāpati, and ĀpŚS. XV.7.6.

In conclusion two passages from the two oldest Upaniṣads may be mentioned. The Chāndogya Upaniṣad (III.1–5) contains a series of speculations on the *rasa* that is gathered from the Vedas. It is then argued (III.5.4) that this *rasa* is identical with the nectar *(amṛta)*, and that there are five forms of *amṛta* (III.6–10): first, that on which the Vasus live, using Agni as their mouth; second, that of the Rudras, who use Indra as their mouth; third, that of the Ādityas, whose mouth is Varuṇa; fourth, that of the Maruts, with Soma as their mouth; and fifth, that of the Sādhyas, who use Brahma as their mouth. This Brahma is the pitā Brahma (not Brahmā!) of III.11.4–5, the predecessor of god Brahmā, who was to take Bṛhaspati's place in the zenith.

While in this classification the Viśve Devas are absent, they occur in the Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad as the fourth group, the fifth being the Maruts [197].

From the preceding sketch it will be clear that, whatever the complications and contradictions of the system of classification, the world of the Devas consisted basically of three groups, and that the Ādityas belonged from the beginning (that is, from the mythic beginning of this world) [198] to this main body of gods, which was distinct from "the former gods", the Sādhyas and Āptyas [199].

This is the more remarkable because even the Rigvedic poets, though in a lesser degree than the later theologians, at times hint at their ambiguous character. In X.63.4 they are called "the gods who have the magic power of the serpent(s)" [200], in II.27.16, 29.5 [201] there is a reference to their snares *(pā́śāḥ)* and VII.61.5 mentions the "attacks" or "deceits" *(drúhaḥ)* of Varuṇa and Mitra, a notion more familiar in the brāhmaṇas [202]. Varuṇa's *dhū́rti* "malice, viciousness" is also referred to [203]. That the Ādityas were Devas of a special kind, different from the other groups, has, indeed, never been questioned [204].

The general conclusion must be that the Ādityas were originally Asuras, who had been received (a mythological conception, not a historical process!) in the world of the gods. However, although fully incorporated in the Devas, they still retained some ambiguous traits, being both beneficent and demoniacally destructive. Most illustrative in this respect is the contrast between the two aspects of the dual deity Mitrā́-Váruṇā. In the organized cosmos the Ādityas represent the under world aspect. This is

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[197] BĀU. I.4.12 (=ŚBM. XIV.4.2.24) *sa viśam asṛjata, yāny etāni devajātāni gaṇaśa ākhyāyante: Vasavo Rudrā Ādityā Viśve Devā Maruta iti.*

[198] TS. VII.1.5.1 (after the earth has arisen in the waters) *tásyām aśrāmyat Prajā́patiḥ, sá devā́n asṛjata, Vásūn Rudrā́n Ādityā́n. té devā́ḥ Prajā́patim abruvan.*

[199] On the Sādhyas see Excursus.

[200] *devā́so . . . áhimāyāḥ*, but the epithet may have been taken from VI.52.15, where it characterizes the Viśve Devāḥ. See n. 205.

[201] See the ample discussion by Renou, EVP. 7, p. 58.

[202] Cf., e.g., KS. XVII.19 (264,10) *yas te rājan Varuṇa druhaḥ pāśo.*

[203] E.g., I.128.7, VIII.27.15 and cf. Geldner, Ved. Studien I, p. 142.

[204] See Bergaigne, Rel. véd. III, pp. 88ff., 256ff. and passim, B. Geiger, Die Amәša Spәntas, pp. 157, 220ff., etc.

especially true of Varuṇa who in the day-time resides in the cosmic waters beneath the earth, at the lower end of the world axis. In the dualistic structure of the cosmos the Ādityas are the opponents of the gods of the upper world (Vasus, or Vasus and Rudras?). All that can at present be said about their mutual relations, however, has a provisory character. There does not seem to be any open hostility between the Ādityas and the other gods except at the end of the year. It must be assumed that during the critical period of the transition to the New Year the Ādityas again sided with the Asuras, who returned from outside the cosmos to resume their contest with Indra for the supremacy in the world. Only this assumption would seem to make the Rigvedic theology intelligible as a coherent system. If, however, we compare the scarce Rigvedic data about the verbal contest between Varuṇa and Indra and the former's transition to the world of the gods (IV.42, X.124) with the epic tale of the Churning of the Ocean, where Varuṇa stands apart from (but not above) the contending parties (see p. 108), we must come to the conclusion that even during the annual strife between Asuras and Devas Varuṇa does not take part in the fight. Others have studied his inactive role in connection with the Indian conception of kingship. The conclusions here summarized are strictly limited to the theological system, without reference to the reality of Indian life in which these notions functioned.

Two references in the tenth book to Ādityas born on earth, in heaven and in the waters are here left out of account, because the same is said in earlier books of the Viśve Devāḥ [205], from whom this idea may have been transferred to the Ādityas.

10. ĀDITYAS AND AṄGIRASAS

The relation between the Ādityas and the Aṅgirasas is particularly interesting [206]. The nature of the latter, too, was ambiguous. As the mythological ancestors of man they were, on the one hand, the first performers of the rites and, as magical singers, they assisted (in the Vala-version of the cosmogonical myth) the god Indra Bṛhaspati in liberating the cows [207]. Their role was so important that the god was also

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[205] Cf. X.65.9 *yé pārthivāso divyáso apsú yé*, X.63.2 *yé sthá jātá Áditer adbhyás pári yé pṛthivyás* and, with reference to the Viśve Devāḥ, VI.52.15 *yé ké ca jmá mahíno áhimāyā divó jajñiré apáṁ sadhásthe*. Since X.63.4 *devāso ... áhimāyāḥ* may be an imitation of VI.52.15, the same may be true for stanza 2. Cf. also VI.50.11 *daśasyánto divyáḥ pārthivāso gójātā ápyā mṛḷátā ca devāḥ* (Viśve Devāḥ).

[206] See Sylvain Lévi, La doctrine du sacrifice dans les brāhmaṇas, p. 63ff.

[207] For the relation of the "singers" to Indra see Hanns-Peter Schmidt, Bṛhaspati und Indra, p. 238. Indra is *áṅgirastama* (but this is more often an epithet of Agni and once, in book X, of Soma) and *áṅgirasvat* (II.11.20, VI.17.6, also once said of the Aśvins). Bṛhaspati is *āṅgirasá* (RS., GB II.2.14,15, Baudh. ŚS. XVIII.47: 403,9, 404,3,11) or simply an *aṅgiras*, e.g. JB. III.188, line 4, where Bṛhaspati functions as the *udgātṛ* of the Aṅgirasas ("Die als Opferpriester erforderten sind alle Angirasen", Caland, Jaim. Brāhmaṇa in Auswahl, p. 161 n. 8). This is, no doubt, an exception: the only parallel is KB. XXX.6, where Bṛhaspati is a *brahmán*, but the other versions (ŚB. III.5.1.15, AB. VI.34.2, GB. II.6.14 (266,11) only mention

said to be an *áṅgiras*. On the other hand, they were also, as the mythological prototype of man, the first to follow the primeval man Yama to the realm of the dead, which accounts for their close connection with Yama and the Fathers. Their character was, accordingly, intrinsically ambiguous, beneficent and inauspicious. As benefactors they are sometimes, even in the Rigveda [208], treated as gods [209]. As for their connection with the world of the dead cf. VS. XXXVIII.9 "(I offer) thee to Yama, who is accompanied by the Aṅgirasas and the Pitaras" [210], and especially in the funeral rites, cf. RS. X.14.3–6 (3) "Mātalī with the kavyas, Yama with the Aṅgirasas, Bṛhaspati, growing, with the singers, revel, some *svāhā*, others *svadhāyā* (in the way corresponding to the funeral ceremonies)", (4ab) "Sit down on this *prastará*, O Yama, uniting with the Aṅgirasas, the Pitaras . . .", (5ab) "Come thou here, with the Aṅgirasas who share in the sacrifice, O Yamá, revel with the descendants of the Virūpas . . ." (6ab) "The Aṅgirasas, our Fathers, the Navagvas, the Atharvans, the soma-spending Bhṛgus, [may we be in their favour] . . . [211]. The Aṅgirasas are called *vírūpāsaḥ* [212], which has been interpreted as referring to their ambiguous nature, since they belong to the opposed parts of the cosmos. The *vairūpás*, "sons of the virūpa(s)", were probably not different from the Aṅgirasas [213].

It thus appears that in many passages where the Aṅgirasas are not

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Agni as the hotṛ. As for the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa itself, in I.125 Bṛhaspati acts as the purohita of the Devas, as against Uśanā Kāvya, who is the purohita of the Asuras. In the epic, again, Bṛhaspati is *Aṅgiras muni* (I.71.6), *Aṅgirasām variṣṭha* (V.16.27), but also an Āditya (I.60.38 *Bṛhaspatiś ca bhagavān Ādityeṣv eva gaṇyate*).

[208] Cf. VII.44.4, where they take the place of the Rudras *(Ādityébhir Vásubhir Áṅgirobhiḥ)* and VII.10.4, where *Bṛ́haspátim ṛ́kvabhir viśvávāram* is mentioned by the side of Indra with the Vasus, etc. Otto Strauss, Bṛhaspati im Veda, p. 40, characterized them as "die priesterlichen Heroen". They are *yajñíya* (X.14.5).

[209] Later they are sometimes actually called *Áṅgiraso devā́ḥ*, e.g., AB. VIII.14.4 *Marutaś ca tvā 'ṅgirasaś ca devāḥ*, TS. VII.1.18 *Áṅgirobhir devébhir devátayā*.

[210] *Yamā́ya tvā́ 'ṅgirasvate pitṛmáte svā́hā*.

[211] X.14.3 *Mātalī kavyair Yamó Áṅgirobhir Bṛ́haspátir ṛ́kvabhir vāvṛdhānáḥ, . . .* (4) *imáṁ Yama prastarám ā́ hí sīdā́ 'ṅgirobhiḥ pitṛ́bhiḥ saṁvidānáḥ, . . .* (5) *Áṅgirobhir ā́ gahi yajñíyebhir Yáma vairūpair ihá mādayasva, . . .* (6) *Áṅgiraso naḥ pitáro návagvā Átharvāṇo Bhṛ́gavaḥ somyā́saḥ . . .* See H.-P. Schmidt, op. c., p. 56f.

[212] RS. X.62.5–6. See Schmidt, p. 40 and IIJ. 13, p. 282. Macdonell, Ved. Myth. 143, it is true, takes *vírūpa* as a proper name; similarly Geldner in his translation of X.62.5–6, 78.5 (as against III.53.7).

[213] Whereas in VII.10.4 the singers *(ṛ́kvan)*, who must be identical with the Aṅgirasas, are the companions of Bṛhaspati, they have here been doubled because the Aṅgirasas occur under their proper name as companions of Yama. This is a case where the question arises what influence the poetical technique of the Rigvedic poets may have had on their theological phrasing. The poet who composed the pāda X.14.3b *Bṛ́haspátir ṛ́kvabhir vāvṛdhānáḥ* may well have had in mind VII.10.4d *Bṛ́haspátim ṛ́kvabhir viśvávāram*. In that case (which cannot be proved to be true since no other possible reminiscences of VII.10 can be pointed out) the main problem would be why the poet introduced Bṛhaspati (see Hanns-Peter Schmidt, l.c.). The doubling itself may either be due to purely technical considerations of versification or to a theological necessity of mentioning both Yama and Bṛhaspati.

fulfilling their cosmogonical task of opening the Vala, they are distinctly inauspicious. Their name is sometimes explained from their birth from an *aṅga* (member) of Death (Varuṇa Mṛtyu!)[214], which reminds us of their Rigvedic designation as sons of the (primordial father) Asura[215]. An aetiological myth related of a pact which they concluded with the Fathers[216]. These unmistakable connections with the world of the dead cannot but have affected the image that Vedic Indians formed of the Aṅgirasas and must have contributed to "die niedrige Bewertung von Atharvan und Aṅgiras"[217]. The same is true of Yama, the mythical first man. From AS. XIX.56.1, which says that Sleep originated in Yama's realm and was formed "in the womb of the Asura" *(ásurasya yónau)*, von Bradke, p. 101, had already concluded that Yama had Asuric traits of character[218]. He had also rightly pointed to TS. II.1.4.3, where, in a curious contest between the Devas and Yama, the latter apparently stands for the entire group of Asuras[219]. Would it be right to say as a general rule that all deities who have gone over from the Asuras to the Devas still retain, in spite of their having become *yajñíya*,

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[214] GB. I.1.7 *taṁ Varuṇaṁ mṛtyum abhyaśrāmyad, abhyatapat, samatapat. tasya śrāntasya taptasya saṁtaptasya sarvebhyo 'ṅgebhyo raso 'kṣarat, so 'ṅgaraso 'bhavat, taṁ vā etam aṅgarasaṁ bhavantam Aṅgirā ity ācakṣate parokṣeṇa.* Otherwise AB. III.34.1 *ye 'ṅgārā āsaṁs, te 'ṅgiraso 'bhavan.*

[215] Properly speaking RS. III.53.7, X.67.2 *diváṣ putráso ásurasya vīráḥ* only implies the existence of a *pitṛ́ ásura* (who is here identified with heaven, although there can be no doubt that the old father Asura belonged to the primeval world, see in general Bergaigne III, p. 85, and cf. above, p. 13ff., Etudes Asiatiques 25, p. 97f.). As is well known, von Bradke, Dyâus Asura, pp. 44–60, thought that in such passages traces of an old god Dyaus Asura could be found. It is no longer necessary to dwell upon his theory and those of Hillebrandt (Varuṇa und Mitra, p. 108, Ved. Myth. II², p. 63). The question remains to be answered, however, why the Asura, in whose realm of undifferentiated chaos heaven can only have existed as a potentiality, is here identified with that very heaven. As for the Aṅgirasas, who are said to have been born from the primordial world, a warning against euhemeristical explanations may not be out of place. It may be correct to define the Aṅgirasas as deified ancestral priests, but this does not mean that they are a reminiscence of older times. They belonged entirely to mythology, as priests who in the beginning had cooperated with the Devas to create the cosmos. To the Indians, who transformed every historical process into a repetition of the mythical pattern, there can hardly have been a contradiction between "die priesterlichen Heroen" (see n. 208) and semigods, who even had their place in the system of classification among the gods. Was there some connection between the fact that they were "sons of the Asura Heaven" and the place in the zenith which is often assigned to them?

[216] See Lévi, Doctrine, p. 68 and TB. II.1.1.1–2 *Áṅgiraso vaí sattrám āsata. téṣāṁ Pṛśnir gharmadhúg āsīt. sá 'rjīṣéṇā 'jīvat. tè 'bruvan, kásmai nú sattrám āsmahe yé 'syā́ óṣadhīr ná janáyāma íti. té divó vṛṣṭím asṛjanta. yā́vantaḥ stokā́ avápadyanta, tā́vatīr óṣadhayo 'jāyanta, íti. tā́ jātā́ḥ pitáro viṣéṇā 'limpan.* (2) *tā́sāṁ jagdhvā́ rúpyanty aít. tè 'bruvan, ká idám itthám akar íti. vayáṁ bhāgadhéyam icchámānā íti pitáro 'bruvan.* For *rupyantī* cf. KS. XXV.4 (107,2) *arupyat.*

[217] Paul Horsch, Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur, p. 238.

[218] See above, p. 31 and cf. Bergaigne, I, p. 91ff., Arbman, Rudra, p. 306 n. 2.

[219] TS. II.1.4.3 *devā́ś ca vaí Yamā́ś cā 'smiṁ lokè 'spardhanta. sá Yamó devā́nām indriyáṁ vīryàm ayuvata. tā́d Yamásya yamatvám.*

a dark, demonic aspect? This is certainly true of Agni and Soma, who are sometimes called *āsurá* in the Rigveda and about whose "Varuṇic" character at certain stages of the ritual (particularly when they are *upanaddha*) the texts do not leave any doubt [220]. This would also explain why *Svápna*, the god of sleep, in spite of his transition from the Asuras to the Devas (see p. 31) is still considered a harmful, inauspicious deity [221]. As such he can be paralleled with the Aṅgirasas. The question as to just when the latter were considered ominous and when, apart from the Vala-myth, they were godlike would require a special study [222].

The preceding remarks were essential for a better insight into one of the most intriguing characteristics of the Ādityas. Within the limits of the organized cosmos, that is, in terms of the cyclical cosmic process as completed within a year, up to the New Year Festival, they are never, as far as I can see, in conflict with the other groups of gods. On the other hand, in the brāhmaṇas they are depicted as being traditionally in conflict with the Aṅgirasas, in spite of the fact that the latter are not really gods (see n. 208). While both parties have an ambiguous character, the Ādityas here fight as true Devas [223]. Their opponents, the Aṅgirasas, by the very fact of this opposition, here become representatives of the Asuras. Just as in the contest between the Devas and Yama mentioned above, the fight between Ādityas and Aṅgirasas was interpreted, in accordance with the fixed pattern of the cosmic contest, as a special instance of the eternal struggle between Devas and Asuras. As a result of this polarization the Aṅgirasas became simply Asuras. That this interpretation gives a correct picture of the way the Indian priests looked at their theological system is shown by the fact that in two brāhmaṇas (ŚB. and JB.) the authors, in the middle of the tale, seem for a brief moment to have forgotten who the real actors are. They substitute *devâḥ* and *ásurāḥ* for the correct terms *ādityâḥ* and *áṅgirasas*, which reappear at the end of the legend. This is, no doubt, primarily a problem of text tradition.

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[220] For *agnír úpanaddhaḥ* see, e.g., Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II, p. 60 and cf. p. 21, IIJ.12, p. 281, 15, p. 231f.

[221] As for Svapna (Sleep), in spite of his changing sides and joining the gods (see above, p. 31), the Atharvavedic poets do not rate him very high. Cf. XI.8.19 "Sleep, laziness, destruction, the deities called evils *(pāpman)*, old age, baldness and greyness entered, one after the other, the body" *(svápno vaí tandrîr nírṛtiḥ pāpmâno nâma devátāḥ, jarâ khálatyaṁ pâlityaṁ śárīram ánu prâviśan)*.

[222] In this connection the circumstance that in the hymns Agni is often referred to as *áṅgiras* and even *áṅgirastama* may be meaningful (cf. also AB. VI.34.2 *Aṅgirasāṁ vā eko 'gniḥ*). Our insight into Vedic theology, however, is still far too imperfect to explain the exact character of the relation between Agni and the Aṅgirasas.

[223] In contrast with the normal practice of the Ādityas of keeping out of the contest with the Asuras (with whom they remain connected by relationship, see p. 59), there are some Yajurvedic passages where the Ādityas stand for the Devas as a group in their fight against the Asuras. Cf. KS. XXVIII.6 (160,6), KKS. XLIV.6 (261,20/306,10) *Ādityā vā asurān hatvā* versus an immediately preceding passage KS. XXIII.8 (83,10) XXVIII.2 (154,1), KKS. XXXVI.5 (191,14/223,5) XLIV.2 (256,15/299,17) *devā vā asurān hatvā* and the corresponding passage MS. IV.6.9 (92,14) *devâ ásurān hatvâ*, etc.

It is possible that in some text two different versions of one and the same tale have been confused. Still, there is apparently more to it, and if there has been a confusion, this was made possible by the fact that the contrast between Ādityas and Aṅgirasas had a structural character. This is shown by the first introductory words in ŚB. XX.2.2.9 "Now, the Ādityas and the Aṅgiras, both of them sprung from Prajāpati [224], were contending together saying . . .". These words, and ŚB. III.5.1.13 "Now, in the beginning there were two kinds of beings here, the Ādityas and the Aṅgirasas" explain what the author of AB. I.16.39 meant with his laconic words "The Ādityas and the Aṅgirasas existed here" [225]. From these passages it appears that the contrast between Ādityas and Aṅgirasas was one of the ways in which the fundamental cosmic dualism was expressed. It is clear that this conclusion only reveals a basic pattern but does not explain why the Aṅgirasas were the chosen adversaries of the Ādityas [226]. It must also be repeated that, apart from the structural aspects, there is a textual problem that has to be solved by its specific method. In particular the strange contradiction in the version of the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa, where the Devas are, on the one hand, represented as identical with the Ādityas [227] and, on the other, as standing above the two parties may be due to a confusion, two different versions having been mixed.

The various passages where the Ādityas are depicted as contending with the Aṅgirasas refer partly to the ritual of the *sadyaḥkrī*, when the Soma is bought and offered up on one and the same day [228], and partly

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[224] See above, n. 23. This discussion is a more elaborate version of some brief remarks made in IIJ. 13, p. 282.

[225] ŚB. XII.2.2.9 *áthā 'dityáś ca ha vá Áṅgirasaś ca, ubháye prājāpatyá aspardhanta, vayáṁ pûrve svargáṁ lokám eṣyāmo vayáṁ pûrva iti*, III.5. 1.13 *dvayyò ha vá idám ágre prajá āsuḥ, Ādityáś caivá 'ṅgirasaś ca*, AB. I.16.39 *Ādityāś caive 'hā 'sann Aṅgirasaś ca.*

[226] The basic pattern could also be elaborated in other ways. Much better known is the contrast between Atharvans and Aṅgirasas, which is a replica, on the level of non-divine groups, of the dualism. For *ātharvaṇa* "holy" versus *āṅgirasa* "magical" see Maurice Bloomfield, The Atharvaveda, p. 112, H.-P. Schmidt, Bṛhaspati und Indra, p. 39.

[227] Already pointed out by Caland, Das Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa im Auswahl, p. 161 n. 11.

[228] Cf. AB. VI.34.2 *Ādityāś ca ha vā Aṅgirasaś ca svarge loke 'spardhanta: vayam pūrva eṣyāmo, vayam iti. te hā 'ṅgirasaḥ pūrve śvaḥsutyāṁ svargasya lokasya dadṛśus, te 'gnim prajighyur—Aṅgirasāṁ vā eko 'gniḥ—parehy, Ādityebhyaḥ śvaḥsutyāṁ svargasya lokasya prabrūhī 'ti . . .* KB. XXX.5(6).2 *Ādityāś ca ha vā Aṅgirasaś cā 'spardhanta: vayam pūrve svargaṁ lokam eṣyāma ity Ādityā, vayam ity Aṅgirasas. te 'ṅgirasa Ādityebhyaḥ(-ān)prajighyuḥ: śvaḥsutyā no, yājayata na iti. teṣāṁ hā 'gnir dūta āsa, ta Ādityā ūcur: athā 'smākam adyasutyā, teṣāṁ nas tvam eva hotā 'si, Bṛhaspatir brahmā, 'yāsya udgātā, Ghora Āṅgiraso 'dhvaryur iti . . .* GB. II.6.14 *Ādityāś ca ha vā Aṅgirasaś ca svarge loke 'spardhanta: vayaṁ pūrve svar eṣyāmo, vayaṁ pūrva iti. te hā 'ṅgirasaḥ śvaḥsutyāṁ dadṛśus. te hā 'gnim ūcuḥ: parehy, Ādityebhyaḥ śvaḥsutyāṁ prabrūhī 'ti . . .* JB. III.187f. *Ādityāś ca vā Aṅgirasaś ca svarge loke 'spardhanta. ta aikṣanta: yatare no yatarān yājayiṣyanti, te hāsyanta iti. te 'ṅgirasaḥ pūrve yajñaṁ samabharan śvaḥsutyāṁ, te 'gnim Āṅgirasaṁ dūtaṁ prāhiṇvann: imāṁ naḥ śvaḥsutyām Ādityebhyaḥ prabrūhī 'ti. sa etyā 'bravīd: Ādityā, Aṅgiraso vaḥ*

to the *Abhiplava ṣaḍaha* ritual[229]. The confusion is only found in ŚB. III.5.1.13–22 and in the corresponding passages in JB. III.187–188 and II.115–116, which Caland has put together in his Auswahl, pp. 158–161. These two passages are here quoted in the translations by Eggeling and Caland respectively. The italics are mine. Of the other passages only the first lines are quoted in the foot-notes.

> Śatapatha Brāhmana III.5.1.13 "Now, in the beginning there were two kinds of beings here, the Ādityas and the Aṅgiras. The Aṅgiras then were the first to prepare a sacrifice, and having prepared the sacrifice they said to Agni, 'Announce thou to the Ādityas this our to-morrow's Soma-feast, saying, "Minister ye at this sacrifice of ours!"' (14) The Ādityas spake (to one another), 'Contrive ye how the Aṅgiras shall minister unto us, and not we unto the Aṅgiras!' (15) They said, 'Verily by nothing but sacrifice is there a way out of this: let us undertake another Soma-feast!' They brought together the (materials for) sacrifice, and having made ready the sacrifice, they said, 'Agni, thou hast announced to us a Soma-feast for to-morrow; but we announce to thee and the Aṅgiras a Soma-feast even for to-day: it is for us that thou art (to officiate as) Hotṛ!' (16) They sent back some other (messenger) to the Aṅgiras . . . (17) The Aṅgiras then officiated for the Ādityas in the sacrifice with Soma bought (krī) on the same day (sadyas); whence this *Sadyaḥkrī.*

śvaḥsutyāṁ prāhur iti . . . (188) *. . . te 'bruvann: Agne, ciraṁ tad yac chva, imām eva vayaṁ tubhyam adyasutyāṁ prabrūmas, teṣāṁ nas tvaṁ hotā 'si, Gaur Āṅgiraso 'dhvaryur, Bṛhaspatir udgātā, 'yāsyo brahme 'ti sarvān avṛṇata . . .* PB. XVI.12.1 *Ādityāś cā 'ṅgirasaś cā 'dīkṣanta. te svarge loke 'spardhanta. te 'ṅgirasa Ādityebhyaḥ śvaḥsutyāṁ prābruvan . . .* ŚB. III.5.1. 13ff. *dvayyò ha vā́ idám ágre prajā́ āsuḥ, Ādityā́ś caivā́ 'ṅgirasaś ca, tátó 'ṅgirasaḥ pū́rve yajñáṁ sám abharaṁs. té yajñáṁ sambhṛ́tyo 'cur Agním: imā́ṁ naḥ śvahsutyā́m Ādityébhyaḥ prá brūhy, anéna no yajñéna yājayaté 'ti . . .* BaudhŚS. XVIII.22 (369,11) *athā 'dityāś ca ha vā Aṅgirasaś ca suvarge loke paspṛdhire. te 'ṅgirasa Ādityān abhiprajagmur Agninā dūtena: śvaḥsutyā na ity, athā 'smākam adyasutye 'ti.* (23) *Ādityā procus: teṣāṁ nas tvaṁ hote 'ti.*

[229] Cf. AB. IV.17.5 *Ādityāś ca ha vā Aṅgirasaś ca svarge loke 'spardhanta: vayam pūrva eṣyāmo, vayam iti. te hā 'dityāḥ pūrve svargaṁ lokaṁ jagmuḥ, paśce 'vā 'ṅgirasaḥ, ṣaṣṭyāṁ vā varṣeṣu . . .* GB. I.4.23 *Ādityāś ca ha vā Aṅgirasaś ca svarge loke 'spardhanta: vayaṁ pūrve svar eṣyāmo, vayaṁ pūrva iti . . .* ŚB. XII.2.2.9 *áthā 'dityáś ca ha vá Áṅgirasaś ca, ubháye Prājāpatyā́, aspardhanta: vayáṁ pū́rve svargáṁ lokám eṣyāmo, vayáṁ pū́rva íti . . .* See also MS. III.4.2 (46,10) *dvyuttaréṇa vai stómenā 'dityáḥ svargáṁ lokám āyaṁs, caturuttaréṇā́ 'ṅgiraso* (as must be read for *stómenā́dityāḥ* and *áṅgirasau* in the editions von Schroeder and Aundh) and KS. IX.16 (119,10) *Áṅgirasaś ca vā́ Ādityā́ś ca svargé lokè 'spardhanta. tá Ādityā́ etáṁ páñcahotāram apaśyaṁs. táṁ mánasā 'nūddrútyā 'juhavus. táta Ādityā́s svargáṁ lokám āyann, ápā́ 'ṅgiraso 'bhraṁśanta* (as against IX.14: 116,19 *pañcahotrā́ vai devā́ asurān prāṇudanta,* MS. I.9.6: 138,3 *páñcahotrā́ vaí devā́ ásurān párābhāvayan, . . .* 138,6 *páñcahotrā́ vaí devā́ḥ svàr āyan,* I.9.5: 136,17 *páñcahotrā́ vai devā́ḥ paśū́n ásṛjanta, párā́ 'surān abhāvayan*), TB. II.2.3.5f. *Ādityā́s cā́ 'ṅgirasaś ca suvargé lokè 'spardhanta: vayáṁ pū́rve suvargáṁ lokám iyāma, vayáṁ pū́rva íti* (6) *tá Ādityā́ etáṁ páñcahotāram apaśyan . . . táto vai té pū́rve suvargáṁ lokám āyan.* Cf. KS. XX.11 (31,19), KKS. XXXI.13 (161,22/188,20) *ādityadhāmāno vā anye prāṇā, aṅgirodhāmāno 'nye. ye purastāt ta ādityadhāmāno, ye paścāt te 'ṅgirodhāmānaḥ,* MS. III.2.9 (30,8) *ādityádhāmāno vā́ úttare prāṇā́, áṅgirodhāmānó 'dhare,* and GB. I.1.7 (Aṅgirasas from Varuṇa Mṛtyu).

(18) They brought Vāc (speech) to them for their sacrificial fee. They accepted her not ... (21) Now Vāc was angry with them: 'In what respect, forsooth, is that one better than I—wherefore is it, that they should have accepted him and not me?' So saying she went away from them. Having become a lioness she went on seizing upon (everything) between those two contending parties, *the gods and the Asuras.* The gods called her to them, and so did the Asuras. Agni was the messenger of the gods, and one Saharakshas for the Asura-Rakshas. (22) Being willing to go over to the gods, she said, 'What would be mine, if I were to come over to you?' ... So she went over to the gods".

Jaim. Brāhmaṇa III.187[2] "Die Ādityas und Angirasen stritten sich um den (Besitz des) Himmelsraumes. Sie überlegten: "Welche von uns beiden für die anderen als Opferpriester auftreten werden, die werden (auf der Erde) zurückbleiben". Die Angirasen bereiteten (zur Erreichung des Himmels) zuerst ein Opfer vor, nl. eine sich über einen Tag erstreckende Soma-feier, welcher ein für die Weihe und den Somakauf bestimmter Tag vorangeht (eine *śvaḥsutyā*). Sie sandten den zu ihnen gehörigen Agni als Boten ab: "Sage diese unsere Śvaḥsutyā den Ādityas an". Der ging hin und sprach zu den Ādityas: "Die Angirasen sagen euch eine Śvaḥsutyā an" ... (III.188) "Da bereiteten die Ādityas diese Soma-feier vor, bei welcher an demselben Tage der Soma gekauft (und dargeopfert) wird (eine *adyasutyā*). Da sagten sie: "Agni, bis morgen ist lang; hier sagen wir dir die Adyasutyā an. Du sollst unser Hotṛ, der Angirase Go soll unser Adhvaryu, Bṛhaspati unser Udgātṛ und Ayāsya unser Brahman sein" ... (II.115) "Die (Angirasen, von den Ādityas als Opferpriester) erwählt, entzogen sich nicht. Sie gingen hin und verrichteten das Opfer für sie. Als Opferlohn führten sie (nl. die Ādityas) ihnen (den Angirasen) die Vāc in der Gestalt einer weissen mit einem Zügel angebundenen Stute herbei: "Nehmt diese entgegen". Sie sagten: "Diese ist stärker als wir, wir werden sie nicht aufheben". Diese (nl. Vāc), erzürnt aus Erwägung: "Sie haben mich nicht entgegengenommen", nahm die Gestalt einer Löwin [230] mit zwei Mäulern (einem auf beiden Seiten) an, stieg (in die Luft) empor, *und stellte sich zwischen Göttern und Asuras* (d.h. zwischen Ādityas und Angirasen), angreifend *wen sie von den Göttern und Asuras ergreifen konnte. Sowohl die Götter als die Asuras rief[en] sie zu sich heran* [231]. Sich *zu den Göttern hinwendend* sprach sie ... (II.116) "Nun führten *die Ādityas* ihnen (*den Angirasen*) die Sonne in der Gestalt eines weissen mit einem Zügel angebundenen Rosses herbei: "Nimmt diesen entgegen". Sie sagten: "Dieser aber ist stärker als wir; wir werden auch diesen nicht aufheben". Da kamen *die Götter* und Seher zusammen herbei und sagten: "Opfer ohne Opferlohn werden zunichte gehen. Nehmt (ihn) an".

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[230] For this lioness see below, n. 421.

[231] For the text see n. 421. For *(tām upaiva devā)āmantrayanto 'pā 'surāḥ* (Caland, Raghu Vira-Lokesh Chandra) the MSS. read *amantrayantovāsurāḥ* (ka), *amantrayantopāsurāḥ* (kha, ga). The reading *āmantrayanta* seems to be an emendation but is wrong: Viśvabandhu Śāstrī gives for the brāhmaṇas (I, p. 278) some 25 occurrences of *upa-mantrayati*, but only this passage for *upa-ā-mantrayati* (I, p. 289). As for the Saṁhitās (Viśvabandhu, p. 954), it has long been noticed that KS. XXVII.8 (147,1) *tā upāmantrayata abruvatām* is corrupt for *tā upāmantrayata. tāv abruvatām.* Cf. Caland, WZKM. 26 (1912), p. 125, Raghu Vira, Kapiṣṭhala-Kaṭha Saṁhitā, Introduction, p. 30 ([2]p. XXVIII), who however read *tā* for *tāv*, and TS. VI.4.10.1 *té devā́ḥ śáṇḍāmārkāv upāmantrayanta. tā́v abrūtām* ... So there remains ASPaipp. XVII.28.5 *athe'ndrāgnī tam upāmantrayante*, which L. C. Barret emends to *upāmantrayete* (registered by Viśvabandhu) but for which the context rather requires an imperfect. See further n. 418.

11. VARUṆA AS A DEMONIACAL FIGURE AND AS THE GOD OF DEATH

In the context of this study of Varuṇa's relation to Asuras it is necessary to say a few words on the demoniacal aspect of Varuṇa in the Veda and the epic. Since much has been written about it [232] and the later Vedic texts are explicit, there is no need for a circumstantial exposition of facts which are generally known.

When, however, it comes to interpreting the evidence one is again faced with the well-known basic difficulty that the main part of the Rigveda differs from book X and the Atharvaveda in that it contains but few references to the dark aspect.

First of all, it is necessary to stress the fact that Varuṇa was associated, not with Ṛta (the cosmic order) only, but with the pair of opposites Ṛta *and* Druh. The last word denotes all that is not in harmony with the divine laws of the Universe. Such translations as "malice" or "falsehood" evoke too exclusively the idea of ethical relations between men. To avoid this, it will here be translated by "wrongness", which, although admittedly not very satisfactory, has the advantage of not directly evoking ethical associations. This pair of notions originated in the Proto-Indo-Iranian religion [233]. Varuṇa's relations to both entities (an inheritance, it seems, from the undifferentiated primordial world) constitute his basically ambiguous character. On the one hand, it is true, Varuṇa *and Mitra* are guardians of the Ṛta, they are *ṛtāvṛdhā* (VII.66.19) and are said to be free from *drúh* [234]. On the other hand, Varuṇa not only discovers every act against the Ṛta [235] but he is also invoked to

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[232] See, e.g., (1877) Hillebrandt, Varuṇa und Mitra, pp. 53–63 "Varuṇa's Fesseln als Ausdruck für die Nacht (Ungemach, Tod)", pp. 63–70 "Varuṇa's Fessel ein Ausdruck für die Wassersucht"; (1883) A. Bergaigne, Religion védique III, pp. 84 ("caractère équivoque"), 115, 128–129 ("caractère quasi démoniaque"), 139, 147–148, 156; (1893) K. Bohnenberger, Der altindische Gott Varuṇa nach den Liedern des Ṛgveda, pp. 56–61, E. Hardy, Die Vedisch-brahmanische Periode der Religion des alten Indiens, p. 58; (1897), A. A. Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, p. 27; (1898) S. Lévi, La doctrine du sacrifice dans les brâhmaṇas, pp. 96, 152–171; (1899) H. Oldenberg, Aus Indien und Iran, p. 179; (1905) Otto Strauss, Bṛhaspati im Veda, p. 19f. ("er wird als eine zu überwindende dämonische Kraft betrachtet"); (1916) B. Geiger, Die Amәša Spәntas (Sitzungsber. Kais. Akad. Wiss. Wien, 176 Bd, 7. Abh.), p. 178; (1917) K. F. Johansson, Über die altindische Göttin Dhiṣaṇā und Verwandtes, Upsala, p. 128ff.; (1923) H. Oldenberg, Religion des Veda, 3. und 4. Aufl., pp. 183, 293, 299–304; (1929) A. Hillebrandt, Ved. Mythologie II², pp. 20, 22, 31f., 40, 127 ("mit der doch im ganzen unheilvollen Natur Varuṇa's"), 420 n. 1, Festgabe Garbe, p. 19f.; (1937), J. J. Meyer, Trilogie altindischer Mächte und Feste der Vegetation III, pp. 204ff., 209, 214, 265; (1951), H. Lüders, Varuṇa, p. 676; (1960) J. Gonda, Die Religionen Indiens I, p. 76f., Renou, EVP. 7, pp. 4 ("un artisan du mal"), 20, 58, Festgabe H. Lommel [=Paideuma VII, 4–6], pp. 122–128, especially p. 124; cf. IIJ. 5 (1961), pp. 51–53; 8 (1965), p. 108 n. 63; (1972), J. Gonda, The Vedic god Mitra, pp. 40, 75.

[233] B. Geiger, Die Amәša Spәntas, p. 178ff.

[234] RS. V.68.4, VII.66.18 *adrúhā*, V.70.2 *adruhvāṇā*.

[235] AS. I.10.2 *víśvaṁ hy ùgra nicikéṣi drugdhám*.

deliver from his noose[236], which is an indirect indication of his power over *drúh*[237]. Most earlier studies on Varuṇa, indeed, omit to mention that Varuṇa's dark aspect is identical with the antithesis of Ṛta, namely Druh. It has been argued elsewhere that the other aspect, the one which delivers from evil, is identical with Mitra, when and in so far as there is a reference to the dual godhead Mitrā́-Váruṇā[238], the "dieu unique à deux noms"[239].

An indication that there has, indeed, been a euphemistic reticence with regard to Varuṇa is the occurrence of taboo substitutes for his name. It has been suggested that the Old Iranian name Ahura Mazdā may have been such a substitute for the name Varuṇa[240], which is attested as early as the treaty of the Mitanni king Šattiwaza of c. 1380 B.C. As B. Geiger has pointed out[241], similar indirect denotations are found in the Rigveda (VIII.42.1 *ásuro víśvávedāḥ*, I.24.14 *asura pracetaḥ*). It might be objected that the Rigvedic terms are not specific (as Geiger himself remarks), *prácetas* being much more commonly used as an epithet of Agni, but in the Yajurveda the words *prácetās tvā Rudraíḥ paścā́t pātu* can hardly refer to any other god but Varuṇa (as it is, indeed, interpreted by Sāyaṇa, Uvaṭa and Mahīdhara), and in the classical literature Pracetas is, from Kālidāsa and Amara onwards, used as a name of Varuṇa[242]. Cf., e.g., Bāṇa, Kādambarī, p. 217, l. 2 Peterson (as against pp. 37,13, 79,21, 119,8, 123,15, where the common name is used).

The question as to why the Rigvedic poets seldom refer to this dark aspect has rarely been given the attention it obviously deserves. It has often struck scholars that Death, for instance, is rarely mentioned in the old family collections[243]. It may be considered significant that in the

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[236] In support of this thesis may be quoted, e.g., TS. II.3.13.2 "Varuṇa seizes him with the Varuṇa-noose" *(Váruṇa enaṁ varuṇapāśéna gṛhṇāti)* versus "Varuṇa frees him from the Varuṇa-noose" (e.g. II.3.12.2 *sá evaí 'naṁ varuṇapāśā́n muñcati.* See further below, n. 252, etc.

[237] RS. VII.86.5 *áva drugdhā́ni pítryā sṛjā́ nó 'va yā́ vayáṁ cakṛmā́ tanū́bhiḥ*, I.24.14 *rā́jann énāṁsi śiśrathaḥ kṛtā́ni*, etc.

[238] See IIJ. 5, p. 46ff. and Bergaigne III, p. 128f., who opposes his dark aspect as belonging to the natural order to his lighter one, as connected with the religious order, which is an illegitimate intrusion of Roman-Catholic theology into the domain of Vedic religion. Nevertheless Bergaigne has, more sharply than most other scholars, recognized the basic problem.

[239] Renou, EVP. 7, p. 3. Similarly Johansson, Die altindische Göttin Dhiṣáṇā und Verwandtes, p. 134.

[240] See IIJ. 5, p. 55, 8, p. 109 n. 68. Others may already have expressed the same opinion previously but, if so, they have escaped my notice.

[241] Die Amə̄ša Spəntas, p. 213.

[242] For the Yajurvedic formula see KS. II.9 (14,20), KKS. II.3 (16,18/19,22), TS. I.2.12.2, VS. V.11, ŚB. III.5.2.5, cf. TĀ. I.20.1 and TS. VI.2.7.5. For the classical literature see PW., and cf. Bāṇa, Kādambarī p. 217, 2 Peterson (as against pp. 37,13, 79,21, 119,8 and 123,15, where the common name is used). See for the mythological background IIJ.18, p. 35.

[243] Macdonell, Ved. Mythology, p. 165 "In the Vedic hymns there is little reference to death".

tenth book of the Rigveda there are fifteen occurrences of the word *mṛtyú*, whereas in the other books it does not occur at all, except in one of the latest interpolations inserted after the composition of the Padapāṭha (VII.59.12 *mṛtyór mukṣīya*, see Oldenberg, Prolegomena, p. 511). Saying that "the thoughts of the poets of the RV., intent on the happiness of this earth, appear to have rarely dwelt on the joys of the next life" [244] does not provide an explanation for this fact, nor can the characterization of their spirit as *diesseitig* or positive [245] be regarded as such. One is driven to the conclusion that there was an intentional euphemistic reticence [246]. The only explanation so far proposed for this reticence is the theory that the Rigvedic hymns differed from those of the later Saṁhitās in that they had been composed for a specific seasonal festival, during which Varuṇa was particularly dreaded as he had probably again become an Asura for a short while [247].

It will be sufficient to summarize a few details. First, there is, in spite of Oldenberg's rejection [248], an undeniable relation between Varuṇa and Vṛtra [249]. Second, there is an unmistakable relation between Varuṇa and

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[244] Op. c., p. 169.

[245] So recently Ogibenin, see the next note.

[246] Cf. Bergaigne III, pp. 76 ("atténuation de l'idée primitive d'une défaite"), 115 (Varuṇa is "une forme de Vṛtra élevée à la dignité divine"), 144 ("allusion plus ou moins vague à certains traits de ressemblance entre le personnage divin de Varuṇa et le personnage démoniaque de Vṛitra"), 148 ("atténuations"), S. Lévi, Doctrine du sacrifice, p. 167: "Le caractère de Varuṇa ne doit donc pas faire illusion; si parfois il apparaît comme le gardien de la morale, c'est simplement en vertu de sa nature rituelle. Il est . . . divinité chatouilleuse, mal commode, peu maniable, prompte à se retourner contre qui la manie, dangereuse à heurter, dangereuse à invoquer. Un nom si périlleux, susceptible par sa seule énergie de déchaîner tant de maux, appelait un palliatif. Comme le farouche Rudra, évocateur des larmes, a reçu des noms de propitiation et de paix pour annuler l'effet de ses noms sauvages et violents et s'est dédoublé en Rudra-Çiva, Varuṇa a été associé à Mitra, divinité très vague . . .", J. J. Meyer, Trilogie III, p. 254 n., Kuiper, IIJ. 5, p. 52 ("the euphemistic reticence of India's oldest text"), B. L. Ogibenin, Struktura mifologičeskix tekstov "Rigvedy" (Moskva, Akad. Nauk, 1968), p. 77 n. 1 "sleduet ukazat', čto vedijskie teksty otražajut liš' položitel'nye (pravye) členy protivopostavlenij; strogo govorja, to, čto oboznačaetsja otricatel'nymi (levymi) členami, ne predstavleno v "Rigvede"—eto svjazano s odnostoronne pozitivnym xarakterom pamjatnika." That the character of the text may seem different from the other Vedas is not so much due to its different theological position as to a taboo caused by the period of contest. A similar euphemism can be found in the reticence of the Rigvedic poets with regard to the slaying of Soma; see H. Lommel, Symbolon 4 p. 158f.

[247] Cf. IIJ. 5, p. 53 and above, pp. 23, 41f.

[248] Oldenberg, Textkritische und exegetische Noten II, p. 343.

[249] See above, n. 246 and Bergaigne II, p. 202, III, pp. 115, 128, 144, 148, S. Lévi, Doctrine du sacrifice, p. 168, Geldner, Vedische Studien II, p. 292ff., Übersetzung III, p. 353, Bloomfield, The Atharvaveda, p. 107, SBE. 42, p. 370, Keith, Religion and Philosophy, p. 100, Charpentier, Die Suparṇasage, p. 118, Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², pp. 33, 40, Renou, Festgabe Lommel, p. 125 n. 12, EVP. 7, p. 82, Eliade, Eranos Jahrbuch 27 (1958), p. 208ff., Traité d'histoire des religions p. 365f., Images et symboles p. 128f., Agrawala, Indological Studies-W. Norman Brown, p. 1 and cf. IIJ. 5, p. 52 n. 12.

drúh, as pointed out above. Renou aptly remarks: "Vr [= Varuṇa] est celui qui délivre et en même temps ce dont on se délivre, c'est un personnage ambivalent: les *drúh* n'étaient-elles pas à son service RV. 7.61,5 (et au service de Mitra)?" [250]. Later Vedic texts were more outspoken about this aspect (which is only vaguely indicated in the Rigveda, cf. II.27.3, where the Ādityas are characterized as *dípsantaḥ* "intending to injure" and v. 16 *yá vo māyá abhidrúhe*). They did not tend to conceal euphemistically the god's real character, as was done in the Rigveda, because as theological treatises they were less dangerous than the mantras with their "magical" potency. There is in the brāhmaṇas a constant association of the notions of noose *(páśa)* and *drúh*. Vedic man prayed to be delivered from Varuṇa's noose, or from "wrongness" and the noose, or from the noose of wrongness. Cf. "With the words 'I have been delivered from Varuṇa's noose' he is delivered from the Varuṇa-noose" [251], "With the words 'May I be delivered from wrongness, from Varuṇa's noose' he delivers him from wrongness, from the Varuṇa-noose" [252], "That snare of wrongness of thine, O king Varuṇa, that, consisting of the metre Gāyatrī, has entered the earth and has the *brahman* for its support, that of thine I hereby avert by sacrifice, *svāhā* to it!" [253] The phrase "snares of wrongness" occurs once in the Rigveda: "The furious man, O Maruts, who is fain to kill us, even when we do not expect it, O Vasus, may he put on himself the snares of wrongness" [254]. Cf. also in the Atharvaveda: "Thus I deliver thee from the afterbirth, Nirṛti, the curse that comes from thy kin, from wrongness, from Varuṇa's noose" [255] and "the fetters of wrongness that does not release" [256].

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[250] Renou, Festgabe Lommel, p. 124. Cf. also EVP. 7 (1960), p. 58: "Il semble bien qu'on ne puisse échapper à la notion de *drúh* qui sont au service de VrMi . . . on en arrive à associer Vr. à l'idée du mal AV. 1.10,3 . . ." (where, again, the evolutionistic scheme emerges).

[251] MS. III.9.1 (113,17) etc. *nír Váruṇasya páśād amukṣí 'ti varuṇapāśād evá nírmucyata íti.*

[252] KS. XXVI.2 (124,4), KKS. XL.5 (230,5/269,14) *nir druho nir Varuṇasya pāśān mukṣīye 'ti druha evai 'naṁ varuṇapāśān muñcati.* Cf. KS. III.1 (23,8), KKS. II.8 (19,13/23,9), the Vedic Concordance under *nir varuṇasya* and ŚB. V.2.5.16 *átha yád vāruṇó yavamáyaś carúr bhávati, tát sárvasmād evaìtád varuṇapāśát sárvasmād varuṇyàt prajáḥ prá muñcati tá asyā 'namīvá akilbiṣáḥ prajáḥ prá jāyante . . .*

[253] KS. XVII.19 (264,10) *yas te, rājan Varuṇa, druhaḥ pāśo gāyatracchandāḥ pṛthivīm anvāviveśa brahmaṇi pratiṣṭhitas, taṁ ta etad avayaje, tasmai svāhā*, etc. Cf. XII.6 (168,19) *yas te, rājan Varuṇa, gāyatracchandāḥ pāśas ta(ṁ) ta etad avayaje tasmai svāhā*, etc., MS. II.3.3 (30,10) *yás te, rājan Varuṇa, gāyatráchandāḥ páśo bráhman prátiṣṭhitas táṁ ta eténā 'vayaje*, Vedic Concordance under *yas te rājan.*

[254] RS. VII.59.8 *yó no Maruto abhí durhṛṇāyús tirás cittáni Vasavo jighāṁsati, druháḥ páśān práti sá mucīṣṭa . . .* Geldner translates: "so soll er sich die Schlinge des Trugs (selbst) umlegen", Keith (transl. of TS. IV.3.13.4) "in the noose [*páśam*] of destruction may he be caught."

[255] AS. II.10.2–8 *evá 'háṁ tváṁ kṣetriyán nírṛtyā jāmiśaṁsād druhó muñcāmi Váruṇasya páśāt.* Cf. TB. II.5.6.1 and Heesterman, The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration, p. 18.

[256] AS. XVI.6.10 *ámucyā druháḥ páśān.*

In general the Atharvaveda is much less reticent about the inauspicious character of Varuṇa than the Rigveda and we find there the first passages which openly state that man has to be delivered from Varuṇa: "As thou hast spoken untruth with thy tongue, much wrong, I release thee from king Varuṇa whose laws do not fail" [257]. In the Rigveda similar passages are only met with in the tenth book, cf. "May they (viz. the plants) deliver me from the (evil resulting from a) curse and from what comes from Varuṇa, and also from Yama's fetter and from every sin against the gods" [258]. This so-called "emergence" of Varuṇa's *krūra* aspect has often been explained in terms of a historical evolution and as the result of a biased deformation of the god. As Renou put it in one of the most recent discussions of the problem: "Dans le domaine de la description mythique, l'AV. est un témoin peut-être moins sincère que le Rigveda: les faits sont biaisés selon une orientation tantôt magique, tantôt spéculative . . . [259]. It is, however, rather the Rigvedic evidence that may be called biased. See n. 82, etc.

It need hardly be said that whatever is well-offered is seized by Mitra but that the ill-offered part of the sacrifice is seized by Varuṇa [260]. Varuṇa's *krūra* character is most clearly shown by the fact that he is identical with Death. The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa even uses the term Varuṇa Mṛtyu [261]. In the funeral hymns of the Rigveda it is said that the deceased will see king Varuṇa and Yama in the next world [262] and in one of the Vasiṣṭha hymns, which testify to a close intimacy with Varuṇa, the poet prays the gods that he may not have to go into the "clay house" [263]. In spite of Geldner's different interpretation [264] these words probably refer to the grave [265].

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[257] AS. I.10.3 *yád uvákthā 'nṛtaṁ jihváyā vṛjināṁ bahú, rājñas tvā satyádharmaṇo muñcāmi Váruṇād ahám.* Cf. verse 1, where "this man" is said to be led "upwards" *(ud-nī-)* from the wrath of the mighty one, and verse 2, where homage is paid to Varuṇa's wrath. In *ud-nī-* an indication may be seen of Varuṇa's abode being in the nether world; cf. India Maior (Congratulatory Vol. J. Gonda), p. 147.

[258] RS. X.97.16 *muñcántu mā śapathyàd átho varuṇyàd utá, átho Yamásya páḍbīśāt sárvasmād devakilbiṣāt.* For *varuṇyà* see Eggeling, SBE. 41, p. 57 n. 2.

[259] Festgabe für Herman Lommel (1960) [=Paideuma VII, 4–6], p. 122.

[260] ŚB. IV.5.1.6 *yád vā ījānásya svìṣṭaṁ bhávati, Mitrò 'sya tád gṛhṇāti, yád v asya dúriṣṭaṁ bhávati, Váruṇo 'sya tád gṛhṇāti,* TB. I.2.5.3 *Mitréṇai 'vá yajñásya svìṣṭaṁ śamayanti, Váruṇena dúriṣṭam,* PB. XIII.2.4, XV.1.3; 2.4; 7.7 *yad vai yajñasya duriṣṭaṁ, tad Varuṇo gṛhṇāti, tad eva tad avayajati.* See below, p. 207f. For *śamayanti* cf. KS. XXVII.4 (142,12), KKS. XLII.4 (250,18/292,18) *tā imāḥ prajā Mitreṇa śāntā, Varuṇena vidhṛtāḥ* ("restrained"). Therefore, AB. III.38.3, VII.5.4 *Viṣṇur vai yajñasya duriṣṭam pāti, Varuṇaḥ sviṣṭaṁ, tayor ubhayor eva śāntyai* cannot be explained from what we know of Vedic mythological thought.

[261] GB. I.1.7.

[262] RS. X.14.7 *préhi préhi pathíbhiḥ pūrvyébhir yátrā naḥ pū́rve pitáraḥ pareyúḥ, ubhā́ rājānā svadháyā mádantā Yamám paśyāsi Váruṇaṁ ca devám.*

[263] RS. VII.89.1 *mó ṣú Varuṇa mṛnmáyaṁ gṛháṁ rājann ahám gamam.*

[264] Geldner, Kommentar, p. 115: "die irdene Gruft für die Gebeine, das Beinhaus"; Übersetzung: "die Urne, in der die Gebeine beigesetzt wurden."

[265] Zimmer, Altindisches Leben, p. 407, pointed to AS. XVIII.2.50 *mātā́ putráṁ yáthā sicā́ 'bhy ènam bhūma ūrṇuhi, 51 jāyā́ pátim iva vā́sasā 'bhy ènaṁ bhūma ūrṇuhi,*

Varuṇa's connection with Death is most explicitly stated in the practice of black magic *(abhicāra)*: "When practising witchcraft one should sacrifice a black ram, which belongs to Varuṇa. For Varuṇa is Death. So he causes Death to seize upon him. Verily, this [ram] is symbolic of *pāpman*. *Pāpman* is black, as it were. In that it [the ram] is black, he endows him [the victim] with *pāpman*, saying: "I tie this victim for King Varuṇa, a bull as a share for Indra, for it is his alone. May the gods enter his limbs, may Yama, may Destruction seize our enemies! These deities, verily, have power over man. Having bought him off from these – Yama is Death – he causes Death to seize upon him" [266]. The identification of Varuṇa with *pāpmán* (also MS. II.5.6: 55,3) should be noted in the light of the same identification of Nírṛti (Destruction) in MS. II.5.5 (54,7): *tád enaṁ Nírṛtir pāpmā 'gṛhṇāt*. As is well-known, the black colour is generally associated with Varuṇa, e.g., ŚB. V.2.5.17 "A black cloth is [the fee] for the Vāruṇa [oblation], for what is black belongs to Varuṇa" [267].

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52 *abhí tvo 'rṇomi pṛthivyá mātúr vástreṇa bhadráyā*, and to V.30.14 *(má nú gān) má nú bhúmigṛho bhuvat* "Möge er nicht Bewohner des Hauses von Erde werden." Similarly Hillebrandt, Lieder des Ṛgveda, p. 79 "Haus aus Lehm" and Renou, EVP. 5, p. 72; 7, p. 27. But see Caland, Die altind. Todten- und Bestattungsgebräuche p. 166.

[266] Most explicit is KS. XIII.2 (181,7) *vāruṇaṁ kṛṣṇaṁ vṛṣṇim abhicarann ālabheta, mṛtyur vai Varuṇo. mṛtyunai 'vai 'naṁ grāhayaty. etad vai pāpmano rūpaṁ. kṛṣṇa iva pāpmā. yat kṛṣṇaḥ, pāpmanai 'vai 'nam abhiṣuvati "paśuṁ badhnāmi Varuṇāya rājña Indrāya bhāgam ṛṣabhaṁ kevalo hi, gātrāṇi devā abhisaṁviśantu Yamo gṛhṇātu nirṛtis sapatnān" ity etā vai devatāḥ puruṣasye 'śate. tābhya evai 'nam adhi niṣkrīya (adhiniṣkrīya* von Schroeder and ed. Aundh but cf. TS. III.4.3.1)*—mṛtyur Yamo—mṛtyunai 'vai 'naṁ grāhayati*. Cf. MS. II.5.6 (55,6) *vāruṇáṁ kṛṣṇáṁ pétvam* [cf. IV.7.8: 103,8] *álabhetā 'bhicáran. yád vāruṇó, Váruṇenai 'vai 'naṁ grāhayitvā stṛṇute. kṛṣṇó bhavati. támo vai kṛṣṇáṁ. mṛtyús támo. mṛtyúnai 'vai 'naṁ grāhayaty. etád vai pāpmáno rūpáṁ yát kṛṣṇáṁ. kṛṣṇá iva hi pāpmā. pāpmánai 'vai 'nam abhiṣuvati. táṁ niyuñjyāt "paśúm badhnāmi . . ." ity etábhya evai 'naṁ devátābhyo niryácya—mṛtyúr vai Yamó—mṛtyúnai 'vai 'naṁ grāhayati . . .*, TS. II.1.8.2 *Váruṇenai 'vá bhrātṛvyaṁ grāhayitvā . . .*

[267] ŚB. V.2.5.17 *tásmād ṛṣabhó Vaiśvānarásya dákṣiṇā, kṛṣṇáṁ váso vāruṇásya. tád dhí vāruṇáṁ yát kṛṣṇáṁ. yádi kṛṣṇáṁ ná vindéd, ápi yád evá kíṁ ca vāsaḥ syāt*. For black sacrificial animals offered to Varuṇa, and for the black colour connected with Varuṇa, see Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 21f., J. J. Meyer, Trilogie II, p. 43, III, pp. 208f, 230, 266. On p. 325 Meyer points out that at the Vājapeya sacrifice black and white animals were offered up to Prajāpati, which is based on Sāyaṇa's interpretation of *śyāmá* in ŚB. V.1.3.9 *sárve śyāmáḥ, dvé vai śyāmásya rūpé, śuklám caivá lóma kṛṣṇáṁ ca. dvandváṁ vai mithunáṁ, prajánanaṁ. prajánanaṁ Prajāpatiḥ. prājāpatyā eté*. It is characteristic of Prajāpati that as a god of totality he comprises the light and dark aspects. In the difficult Varuṇa-hymn RS. VIII.41 the last stanza (10) *yáḥ śvetáṁ ádhinirṇijaś cakré kṛṣṇáṁ ánu vratá* may mean "He who made the white wearers of garments black ones, in accordance with his vows". See Grassmann and Oldenberg, Noten for *ádhinirṇij*. Since, however, it remains obscure to which "wearers of *nirṇíj*" the verse refers, no conclusion can be drawn from these words. Other interpretations have been given by Geldner: "Der die weissen, die schwarzen (Farben) nach seinen Gesetzen zum Mantel sich gemacht hat" (implying a double relation which would only be explicable if Varuṇa here stands for the dual deity Mitrā-Váruṇā) and by Renou:

In the same manner Varuṇa's bond *(bandhá)* is used in the Atharvaveda: "King Varuṇa's bond art thou; do thou bind so-and-so, of such-and-such lineage, son of such-and-such mother, in food, in breath" (Whitney) [268].

The most prominent role of Varuṇa in the ritual is that of a "seizer". Instances of this feature are well-known to every reader of brāhmaṇas. Cf., e.g., "With what vehemence Varuṇa seized these creatures, with that vehemence..." [269] but the same expression already occurs in the Rigveda [270]. It is true that sometimes other words are used, such as "injurer" [271], or that he is said to kill or harm [272], but they are much less characteristic. Seized by Varuṇa is the sinner as well as the sick man: Prajāpati, after creating the creatures, caused Varuṇa to seize them as they were offending (against his laws). They then had recourse to Prajāpati and "he saw which this one [was, which was] not seized by Varuṇa. He offered this one [viz., the black ram], which belonged to Varuṇa, in order to free them from Varuṇa. With it he freed them from Varuṇa. A sick man is seized by Varuṇa. Because (this black ram) belongs to Varuṇa, he frees him from Varuṇa" [273].

"Lui qui a mis sur soi les ornements blancs (du jour), noirs (de la nuit)", see EVP. 5, p. 73, 7, p. 31. These translations disregard the grammatical difficulty of *ádhinirṇij* being a masculine noun (see Oldenberg).

[268] AS. X.5.44 *rấjño Váruṇasya bandhò 'si, sò 'múm āmuṣyāyaṇám amúṣyāḥ putrám ánne prāṇé badhāna.*

[269] ŚB. V.4.5.12 *sá yénai 'vaú 'jase 'mấḥ prajấ Váruṇó 'gṛhṇāt, ténai 'vá* ... For *ójas* cf. MS. II.3.1 (27,15) *yấ vām Mitrāvaruṇā ojasyấ tanūs, táyā vām vidhema. táye 'mám amúṁ muñcatam áṁhasaḥ* (and 27,19 *yấ vām Mitrāvaruṇā ojasyấ sahasyấ yātavyấ rakṣasyấ tanūs, táyā* ..., J. J. Meyer, Trilogie III, p. 205 n. 2). Similarly KS. XI.11 (158,11), but TS. II.3.13.1 reads *yấ vām Indrāvaruṇā sahasyấ rakṣasyấ tejasyấ tanūs táye 'mám áṁhaso muñcatam.*

[270] RS. II.29.5 *mấ mấ 'dhi putré vím iva grabhīṣṭa*, X.12.5 *kíṁ svin no rấjā jagṛhe kád asyấ 'ti vratáṁ cakṛmā*, I.139.2 *ādadấthe ánṛtaṁ svéna manyúnā*. See Bohnenberger, Der altindische Gott Varuṇa, p. 57.

[271] ŚB. V.5.4.31 *Váruṇo vấ ārpayitấ.*

[272] Cf., e.g., Śāṅkh. Ār. XII.5 (21) *nainaṁ divyo Varuṇo hanti bhītam*, 6 (28) *nainaṁ pramattaṁ Varuṇo hinasti* and such well-known passages in the Rigveda as II.27.4 *cáyamānā ṛṇấni*, VII.60.5 *imé cetấro ánṛtasya bhū́reḥ*, I.24.11 *mấ na āyuḥ prá moṣīḥ*, I.25.2 *mấ no vadhấya hatnáve jihīḷānásya rīradhaḥ, mấ hṛṇānásya manyáve.*

[273] KS. XIII.2 (180,15) *vāruṇaṁ kṛṣṇaṁ petvam ekaśitipádam ālabhetā 'mayāvī jyogāmayāvī. Prajāpatiḥ prajā asṛjata. tā enam atyacaraṁs. tā aticarantīr Varuṇenā 'grāhayat. tā jihmāḥ pannā aśerata varuṇagṛhītās. tāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ petva āpravata. tasyā 'bhihāya pādam agṛhṇāt. sa prāvṛhyata. sa ekaśitipād abhavat. tāḥ Prajāpatā anāthanta, so 'paśyad yo 'yam avaruṇagṛhītas, tenai 'nā Varuṇān muñcānī 'ti taṁ vāruṇam ālabhata. tenai 'nā Varuṇād amuñcat* ... (see n. 275), MS. II.5.6 (54,17) *Prajấpatiḥ prajấ asṛjata. tấ enaṁ sṛṣṭấ átyamanyanta. tấ atimányamānā Váruṇenā 'grāhayat. tấ váruṇagṛhītāḥ kṛṣṇáḥ pétvó 'dhyaskandat. tásyā 'nuhấya pádam agṛhṇāt. tásya śapháḥ prấvṛhyata. sá ékaśitipād abhavat. tám acāyad: ayáṁ vấvấ 'sấṁ prajấnām ávaruṇagṛhīto. 'néne 'mấḥ prajấ Váruṇān muñcānī 'ti. tấṁ vāruṇám álabhata. táta imấḥ prajấ Váruṇāt prấmucyanta. tád varuṇapramocanīya evaí 'ṣá* ... (see further n. 275). Varuṇa even seizes the gods (as he seized Mitra, MS. IV.5.8: 76,7, KS. XXVII.4: 142,18, KKS. XLII.4: 251,2/293,5); cf. KS. XXVI.2 (123,7), KKS. XL.5 (229,7/268,10) *sarvān vā etad Varuṇo gṛhṇāti yad dīkṣite, manuṣyān pitṝn devān* ... *prajā eva varuṇapāśān muñcati.* That deliverance from *varuṇyà*

A sick person is *váruṇagṛhīta*, seized by Varuṇa [274]. This was particularly true of those who suffered from a chronic disease *(jyógāmayāvin)*. As we have seen above, in these circumstances Varuṇa was equated to *pāpmán* and *mṛtyú*, e.g., "Who is suffering from a chronic disease, him he should cause to offer, for this man is seized by Varuṇa, by *pāpmán*, and he has been ill for a long time. In that it [the ram] belongs to Varuṇa, he thereby delivers him from Varuṇa" [275].

In the speculations of some brāhmaṇas, accordingly, Varuṇa is still associated with Death. In the epic his function is assigned to Yama, whose abode *(yamasādana)* is the "world of the Fathers" *(pitṛloka)*, whereas Varuṇa's world has here become the abode of demons (see p. 90). As early as the Black Yajurveda, however, there is a tendency to connect the *pitáras* with the worlds of gods and men (p. 12). In 1898 Caland suggested the idea that the Yajurvedic custom of locating the *pitáras* not in the South but in the South-East, that is, closer to the East, was due to an attempt to bring them in closer contact with the gods. He even took a further step and put forward the theory that originally the *pitáras* had been associated with the western quarter. In that case Varuṇa's ambiguous relation to the demons might explain why he had been unable to join the blessed fathers' trek from the western to the south-eastern quarter. Since, however, all this is purely hypothetical, there is no need for dwelling upon this theory (see Een idg. Lustratiegebruik, p. 279).

12. VARUṆA IN THE EPIC I

It is generally assumed that in post-Vedic times Varuṇa had sunk to the level of a mere "Lord of the Waters" *(apāṁ patiḥ)*. This opinion

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(see n. 258) is equivalent to deliverance from Varuṇa himself can be inferred from a comparison of, e.g., ŚB. V.2.5.16 *átha yád vāruṇó yavamáyaś carúr bhavati, tát sárvasmād evaì 'tád varuṇapāśát, sárvasmād varuṇyàt prajáḥ prámuñcati* with MS. II.1.2 (3,9) *vāruṇáṁ yavamáyaṁ carúm āmayāvínaṁ yājayed. váruṇagṛhīto vá eṣá yá āmayāvī. Váruṇād evaì 'naṁ téna muñcati*, KS X.4 (128,14) *vāruṇaṁ yavamayaṁ caruṁ nirvapet . . . varuṇagṛhīto vā eṣa yo 'nyasyā 'dadāna upaharamāṇaś carati. yad vāruṇo, Varuṇād evai 'naṁ muñcati.*

[274] Cf. also in classical Sanskrit (lex.) *abhyānta* "sick, diseased". In RS. I.189.3 *Ágne tvám asmád yuyodhy ámīvā ánagnitrā abhy ámanta kṛṣṭíḥ* "O Agni, ward off the diseases from us. Let them seize tribes that are not protected by Agni" the verb *abhi-am-* is used with reference to the diseases themselves. It is certainly not accidental that only in the Yajurveda Varuṇa is said to be the 'seizer', cf. MS.III.12.1 (160,7), KSA. 4.4, TS. VII.4.15, VS. XXII.5, VSK. XXIV.1.5 *tám abhy àmīti Váruṇaḥ* as against TS. II.2.6.2, etc. *táṁ Váruṇo gṛhṇāti.*

[275] MS. II.5.6 (55,2), IV.3.7 (46,18) *yó jyógāmayāvī syắt, tám eténa yājayed. Váruṇena hí vá eṣá pāpmánā gṛhītó. 'thai 'tásya jyóg āmayati. yád vāruṇo, Váruṇād evaì 'naṁ téna muñcati*, KS. XIII.2 (181,1) *pāpmanai 'ṣa gṛhīto ya āmayāvī. kṛṣṇa iva pāpmā. yat kṛṣṇaḥ, pāpmānam evā 'pahate. yad ekaśitipād, varuṇapāśam eva tena pramuñcate* (181,5 *Varuṇād evai 'naṁ muñcati*), XXVII.4 (143,1) *tenai 'naṁ Varuṇād amuñcad. yan maitrāvaruṇo gṛhyate, nirvaruṇatvāya*, TS. II.3.11.1f. *Váruṇa enaṁ varuṇapāśéna gṛhṇāti . . . yó jyógāmayāvī syắd, yó vā kāmáyeta : sárvam áyur iyām íti . . . vāruṇénai 'vaì 'naṁ varuṇapāśắn muñcati.*

[276] Religion védique III, p. 114.

was already expressed in 1883 by Bergaigne in the words: "Cette fonction [viz. as binder] de Varuṇa est peut-être ... celle sur laquelle les poëtes védiques insistent le plus souvent, et l'attribut en est resté attaché à la représentation plastique de Varuṇa dans la mythologie brahmanique, alors qu'il était descendu du rang de Providence vengeresse à celui d'un simple dieu des eaux. Varuṇa est en effet toujours figuré avec une corde à la main"[277]. Sylvain Lévi quoted these words[278] with the sceptical comment: "Reste à savoir s'il s'agit réellement d'une évolution chronologique du personnage". His reservation, dating from a time (1896–1897) when as a young teacher he gave a course on a subject that was still unfamiliar to him, testifies to a remarkably sharp insight into the basic difficulties that surround every study of a Vedic god. There is no denying that there has actually been an evolution in the religious ideas ever since Vedic times. The problem is, however, how far such a development can be reconstructed from what the texts say and omit to say with regard to such an ominous god as Varuṇa, who was apparently surrounded by taboos. Bergaigne's words "un simple dieu des eaux" show how even a scholar of his high rank could fall a victim to the seemingly innocent wording of the texts and to a wrong perspective in which the textual evidence was viewed. In fact, even in the epic, Varuṇa, far from being a simple god of water, still retains a good deal of the ambiguity and complexity that characterized him in the Vedic period. What had changed in the religious conception of the god was not so much his character itself as rather the importance of the cosmic dualism and, accordingly, of the annual contest between Varuṇa and Indra[279]. The increasing emphasis laid on the gods of totality, who transcended this dualism, would seem to be the main reason why the importance of both Varuṇa and Indra, when considered in the context of the total mythological system, is no longer equal to what it was in the Vedic period. It is significant, however, that even in the epic, where Śiva and Viṣṇu have

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[277] At an early stage of Vedic studies it had already been pointed out that it was one of the characteristics of book X that here Varuṇa had "already" become a "Lord of the waters". See R. Roth, ZDMG. 6, p. 73, H. Oldenberg, Prolegomena, p. 267: "Aber Varuṇa und Mitrâ-varuṇau verschwinden nahezu, ebenso Ushas ...", H. Lommel, DLZ. 74 (1953), col. 403 (in a review of Lüders's Varuṇa I): "Neben Feststellung der Tatsachen kommt Entwicklungsgeschichte bei L. wenig zu Wort, und die sich aufdrängende Annahme, dass die Gestalt des ursprünglich noch viel umfassenderen Gottes im Lauf der Entwicklung verarmt sei, so dass er im Epos fast nur mehr der "Herr der Gewässer" ist, bleibt unausgesprochen" [but see the second part: Varuṇa, p. 714]. An attempt to explain the supposed evolution in religious thought was made by R. N. Dandekar, ABORI. 21 (1940), p. 190: "The deterioration in Varuṇa's religious supremacy began with the ascendancy of Indra." It is hoped that the present study will show that the real development was different.

[278] La doctrine du sacrifice, p. 153 n. 6.

[279] This is also the main objection that must be raised to Hopkins's words (Epic Mythology, p. 117): "All this, however, is no indication of Varuṇa's real epic position. He is no longer a heavenly god, no longer a god rivalling Indra, or having stars as eyes. He is lord of water ...". For the decline of the idea of a cosmic contest see above, p. 43.

become the principal gods, Varuṇa still appears to have preserved much of his original character.

We have seen above (n. 113) that in the Veda the Devas often had recourse to Prajāpati for help against the Asuras. The same situation is found in the epic, e.g. when the gods, before the Churning of the Ocean, approach Brahmā [280], or when Prajāpati predicts the defeat of the Asuras in words which still echo the Vedic phraseology [281].

Varuṇa is mentioned as the fifth or fourth of the Ādityas [282], who in the epic are merely one of the classes of the gods and are seldom referred to individually. Just as in the Vedic contest with the Aṅgirasas, they sometimes stand for the gods in general and fight the demons [283]. Since elsewhere both parties are invoked to give their blessings [284], the Ādityas apparently stand for the whole group of Devas, which does not imply that their name is here synonymous with Deva (see PW. and Sørensen, Index). As a curious detail, whatever its significance, it may be pointed out that in the great final single combat between Arjuna and Karṇa, which is full of cosmic symbolism [285], the Ādityas side with Karṇa [286] but the Devas (sic!) and Pitaras with Arjuna.

The demons in these passages are called Daityas, a name nearly or entirely synonymous with Dānavas and Asuras [287]. It has been pointed out above (p. 36) that traces can be found in the epic of the idea that the "demons", no less than the gods, were sons of the World father. Hopkins refers, in illustration of his statement "for Brahman remains also their 'father' and gives them not only boons but good advice" [288], to Mhbh. XIV.26.6f., where an "old tale" is related, according to which Prajāpati,

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[280] Mhbh. I.16.4 *Viṣṇum āsīnam abhyetya Brahmāṇaṁ ce 'dam abruvan.*

[281] Mhbh. V.126.42 *parābhaviṣyanty Asurā Daiteyā Dānavaiḥ saha, Ādityā Vasavo Rudrā bhaviṣyanti divaukasaḥ.* Cf., e.g., MS. III.7.10 (90,6), III.8.5 (99,12) *táto devá ábhavan, párā 'surāḥ*, KS. XII.3 (165,4) *tato devā abhavan, parā 'surā abhavan.*

[282] He is "the oldest and best" of the Ādityas according to Sørensen, An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata, p. 13b (but the reading of V.96.13 crit. ed. differs from V.98.13 Bomb. ed.).

[283] Mhbh. I.58.26 *Ādityair hi tadā Daityā bahuśo nirjitā yudhi*, Rām. I.44.26 *Aditer ātmajā vīrā Diteḥ putrān nijaghnire.* See n. 178!

[284] Rām. II.22.569* *tavā 'dityāś ca Daityāś ca bhavantu sukhadāḥ sadā.* See Hopkins, Epic Myth., p. 47.

[285] See also IIJ. 11, p. 154f and cf., e.g., VIII.67.26 *papāta Karṇasya śarīram ucchritam . . . girer yathā vajrahataṁ śiras tathā.*

[286] See VIII.63.39 *Ādityāḥ Karṇato 'bhavan.* The account is full of contradictions in details. Although Varuṇa is said to side with Arjuna (śloka 40), and Karṇa after his death goes to the world of Vasus and Maruts in heaven (śl. 56), the latter shoots his *vāruṇam astram* (VIII.65.13+, 1039*), and his arrows are like snakes (65.33 *nirmuktasarpapratimaiś ca tīkṣṇais . . . ṣaṣṭyā nārācais*, 37 *śarāṁs tu pañca jvalitān ivoragān*), or they *are* snakes that have sided with Takṣaka's son (65.39 *te nyapatan pṛthivyāṁ mahāhayas takṣakaputrapakṣāḥ*).

[287] Sørensen, Index to the Names, p. 98a, says that Asura "seems to have been totally synonymous with Dānava and Daitya", whereas Hopkins, Epic Mythology, p. 47, thinks that the Dānavas are more "god-like" than the Daityas. If there was a distinction at all, it must have been very small.

[288] Epic Mythology, p. 50.

by merely pronouncing the syllable "om" was teaching "happiness" *(śreyas)* to the Gods, the Ṛṣis, the Nāgas and the Asuras. Much more frequent are the passages where gods of the totality are represented as protecting the *surāsurāḥ*, demons and gods. Thus Brahmā fulfils their wishes and is their *guru*[289]. Kaśyapa, whom Hopkins describes as "the sire of all demons"[290], in fact stands for the cosmic totality: the epic calls him, who had married the two daughters of Prajāpati, Kadrū and Vinatā, "a husband similar to Prajāpati"[291] and according to the Viṣṇupurāṇa he is the father of the Daityas (with Diti), the Nāgas (with Kadrū) and the Ādityas (with Aditi)[292]. In the epic Kaśyapa is said to be the father of gods and Asuras[293]. In the same manner Śiva and Hari/Viṣṇu are called gurus of gods and demons[294], although Viṣṇu is predominantly the destroyer of the demons[295].

13. VARUṆA IN THE EPIC II: THE LORD OF THE WATER

It is not necessary to demonstrate in detail that in the Mahābhārata Varuṇa is still the god of the water *(apāṁ patiḥ)* and the ocean, who can stand for this ocean itself. His palace is on the bottom of the sea. That he resides and even conceals himself in the water is also apparent from the "trick of Varuṇa" *(vāruṇa yoga)*, to which Kauṭalya 7.17.42 refers and which according to Kangle consists in "remaining submerged in water for a long time and coming up at a very distant place". The ancient idea of Varuṇa as the god of the subterranean *samudra* seems, however, gradually to fade away, at least as far as the term is involved. The Rāmāyaṇa, in locating Pannagas and Dānavas in Pātāla in the ocean (VI.21.27, 30; 22.4) apparently mixes up the two notions of the subterranean abode and the sea (see p. 85). When, however, different terms are used, Varuṇa remains the god who provides water in wells and tanks.

In the way the poets represented the relation between the god and his element there is, understandably enough, some variation. It is natural

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[289] Mhbh. XII.326.59–60 *tvaṁ caiva varado brahman varepsūnāṁ bhaviṣyasi, surāsuraganānāṁ ca ṛṣīṇāṁ ca tapodhana* (60) *pitṝṇāṁ ca mahābhāga satataṁ saṁśitavrata, vividhānāṁ ca bhūtānāṁ tvam upāsyo bhaviṣyasi* and XIII.151.3 *devāsuragurur devaḥ sarvabhūtanamaskṛtaḥ* (cf. XIII.17.141).

[290] Hopkins, Epic Mythology, p. 47.

[291] Mbh. I.14.6 *prajāpatisamaḥ patiḥ*. In some versions Kaśyapa is even incidentally identified with Prajāpati, cf. I.20.16 Bombay ed. = fragment 285*, line 10 crit ed.

[292] Viṣṇupurāṇa I.15.141–21.3, I.21.19–22 and I.15.126–134 respectively. This is, of course, different from the older account of the Suparṇākhyāna, where Kadrū and Aditi are synonymous, whereas here Aditi, as the mother of the Ādityas, may possibly have been imagined as standing for the upperworld (=Suparṇī in the Yajurveda, Vinatā in the epic).

[293] I.60.33 *Marīceḥ Kaśyapaḥ putraḥ Kaśyapasya surāsurāḥ, jajñire nṛpaśārdūla lokānāṁ prabhavas tu saḥ*. Cf. XIII.12.26 *rājyahetor vivaditāḥ Kaśyapasya surāsurāḥ*.

[294] See respectively XIII.17.141 *devāsuragurur devo devāsuranamaskṛtaḥ*, and XII.324.20 *surāsuragurum Harim*.

[295] XII.202.29 *nihatya dānavapatīn*, XII.334.14 v. 1. *asuravadhakaraḥ* for *tapasāṁ nidhiḥ*. Cf. VIII.35.34 *(tān . . .) pothayām āsa Bhīmo, Viṣṇur ivā 'surān*.

that they had some difficulty in visualizing what in the brāhmaṇas was a mere mythical identity *(samudró vaí Váruṇaḥ)* and as such a purely abstract notion. In the epic version of the Churning of the Ocean the gods announce the churning to the *sea*, whereupon *Varuṇa* answers (p. 108). The personification of the sea, however, is not always necessarily the god. Cf., e.g., Bhāg. Pur. IX.10.13 *sindhuḥ . . . rūpī*, which does not denote Varuṇa. When Rāma, approaching Laṅkā, sees the sea which separates the mainland from his enemy's island, he simply says "Give orders to the sea" (Rām. VI.13.22 *samudro 'yaṁ niyujyatām*), although the poet here often refers to this ocean as "Varuṇa's abode" (*varuṇālaya*: VI.13.11, 12, 21; 14.13; 15.11). The fact that such other epithets as "abode of the Dānavas" (App. I.11.8) and "abode of the *makaras*" (VI.14.8, 11) occur side by side with it shows that *samudra* had come to be taken in entirely the same sense as *sāgara*.

The same episode is found in Bhāsa's Abhiṣekanāṭaka, act IV. Rāma here describes his disappointment at seeing his way barred by the ocean after all the hardships he has overcome. Lakṣmaṇa says, pointing to the sea, "Here is Lord Varuṇa" but then describes the ocean *(saritpatiḥ)*. While Rāma again expresses his annoyance, Rāvaṇa's brother Vibhīṣaṇa arrives through the air and is led before Rāma, who receives him with the words (IV.11,3) "O Vibhīṣaṇa, the mere fact of thine arrival guarantees the success of our enterprise!" *(Vibhīṣaṇa, tvadāgamanād eva siddham asmatkāryam)*. These words, which Bhāsa did not find in Rām. VI.19.7, Bomb., 14.10 crit. ed., prove that he was still aware of the importance of the underlying mythical pattern. When Rāma observes that there is no possibility of crossing the ocean, Vibhīṣaṇa says (IV.11,5) "If the ocean does not grant you passage, your majesty should throw his divine missile on it" *(yadi mārgaṁ na dadāti, samudre divyam astraṁ tāvad visraṣṭum arhati devaḥ)*. When Rāma threatens to dry up the ocean with his arrows (IV.12), Varuṇa enters the stage in confusion. He confesses that he has committed an offense against Nārāyaṇa and says that he will seek protection with the latter. In this passage there is not only the double aspect of the god and his sea but also of Rāma as an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu and as the human hero of the saga. In his first aspect he is worshipped by Varuṇa and respectfully referred to as *bhagavat*, whereas in his second aspect (that is, as *rājaputra* 15,3) he is addressed with *bhavat*. When Varuṇa has granted him passage (16,2 *eṣa mārgaḥ. prayātu bhavān*) and while Rāma's troops march through the passage formed by the sea, Rāma describes the beauty of the sea in the traditional way, well-known from such texts as the Caturbhāṇī and the Mṛcchakaṭikā (16,13 *aho vicitratā sāgarasya. iha hi . . .*). Here and in the final words "Through the favour of the holy god we have crossed the sea" (17,1 *bhagavato prasādād atītaḥ sāgaraḥ*) the distinction between the god and his element is stressed. In Rām. VI.15.1, on the other hand, it is the Ocean himself who appears after Rāma's menaces. In the same verse he is referred to as Sāgara, arising from the middle of the *Samudra*, and as Samudra. The first word is more common for the non-personified

element (VI.14.12; 15.15, 17, 22, 24, 25, 26, 30, 33; 16.1, 2, 3, 6), but cf. *samudra* (VI.14.10, 16, 17; 15.27).

While the Vedic idea of a dualism which splits the world of the Devas into two parties has faded in the epic, this does not mean that the Ādityas, and in particular Varuṇa, have lost their ambiguous character in this period. On the contrary, more openly than in any older text it is now said that Varuṇa maintains secret relations with the dispelled Asuras, who continue to exist outside or on the fringe of the ordered cosmos.

Before considering, however, the relations between the Cosmos and the powers of Chaos on its border-lines, it must first be stated that the Vedic conception of Varuṇa as a *rājā* and *samrāṭ*, which incidentally evoked the idea of Varuṇa's consecration by Prajāpati and the gods [296], survives in the epic. Here several times mention is made of Varuṇa's *abhiṣeka*, e.g. by Brahmā [297], who stands for (or rather, is) the Vedic Prajāpati. One of these passages, viz. Mhbh. IX.46.5ff. is here given in full:

(5) *ādau kṛtayuge tasmin vartamāne yathāvidhi*
Varuṇaṁ devatāḥ sarvāḥ sametye 'dam athā 'bruvan
(6) *yathā 'smān surarāṭ Śakro bhayebhyaḥ pāti sarvadā*
tathā tvam api sarvāsāṁ saritāṁ vai patir bhava [298].
(7) *vāsaś ca te sadā deva sāgare makarālaye*
samudro 'yaṁ tava vaśe bhaviṣyati nadīpatiḥ.
(8) *somena sārdhaṁ ca tava hānivṛddhī bhaviṣyataḥ* [299]
evam astv iti tān devān Varuṇo vākyam abravīt.

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[296] ŚB V.4.3.2 *Váruṇād vá abhiṣiṣicānāt, indriyáṁ vīryàm ápa cakrāma* (in the description of the Rājasūya ritual) for "the Rājasūya is Varuṇa's consecration" *(varuṇasavó vá eṣá yád rājasū́yam)*. In the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa there is a tale of how Varuṇa wishes to become king over all the gods and practices asceticism for a hundred years. Prajāpati then teaches him a *sāman* which makes all the gods stand up in his presence because they see in him a form *(rūpa)* of Prajāpati. He is then consecrated by Prajāpati and the gods: JB. III.152 *atha varuṇasāma. Varuṇo vai rājā sadhamādam ivā 'nyābhir devatābhir āsīt. so 'kāmayata: sarveṣāṁ devānāṁ rājyāya sūyeye 'ti. sa Prajāpatau śataṁ varṣāṇi brahmacaryam avasat. tasmā etat sāmā 'bravīd: etad vai me rājyaṁ rūpaṁ. gaccha. rājānaṁ tvā devāḥ kariṣyanta iti. sa devān abhyait. tam āyantaṁ dṛṣṭvā devāḥ pratyavārohan . . . yad vai naḥ pituḥ Prajāpate rūpaṁ, tad idaṁ tvayi paśyāma iti.* Cf. further JB. II.25–26: the *abhiṣeka* of Āditya at the ritual of the *mahāvrata*.

[297] Mhbh. IX.44.20 *purā yathā mahārāja Varuṇaṁ vai jaleśvaram, tathā 'bhyaṣiñcad bhagavān Brahmā lokapitāmahaḥ, Kaśyapaś ca mahātejā ye cā 'nye nā 'nukīrtitāḥ* and Viṣṇu Purāṇa I.22.1 and 3, Mhbh. IX.45.92 *Aujasaṁ nāma tat tīrthaṁ yatra pūrvam apāṁ patiḥ, abhiṣiktaḥ suragaṇaiḥ.*

[298] Lack of symmetry ("rupture d'équilibre", Renou, Festgabe für Herman Lommel, p. 123), as in RS. VII.84.2 "May Varuṇa's wrath spare us, may Indra give us room" (Bergaigne III, p. 142) and TS. I.8.16.2 (mantra for the adoration of the king) "Thou art Mitra, the kindly . . . thou art Varuṇa, of true rule" *(Mitró 'si suśévo . . . Váruṇo 'si satyádharmā)* where Sāyaṇa stressed the ambiguity of the god (p. 988 line 25): *Varuṇo 'pi kvacid aniṣṭakāritvād anṛtarūpaḥ, kvacit tannivartakatvāt satyarūpaḥ.* Cf. also the commentary on TB. I.7.10.1 *tvaṁ Varuṇo 'si śaucādāv aniṣṭavārakatvāt.*

[299] Soma is the moon (cf. I.16.38 *prasannabhāḥ samutpannaḥ Somaḥ śītāṁśur*

(9) *samāgamya tataḥ sarve Varuṇaṁ sāgarālayam*
apāṁ patiṁ pracakrur hi vidhidṛṣṭena karmaṇā.
(10) *abhiṣicya tato devā Varuṇaṁ yādasāṁ patim*
jagmuḥ svāny eva sthānāni pūjayitvā jaleśvaram.
(11) *abhiṣiktas tato devair Varuṇo 'pi mahāyaśāḥ*
saritaḥ sāgarāṁś caiva nadāṁś caiva sarāṁsi ca.
(12) *pālayām āsa vidhinā yathā devāñ Śatakratuḥ.*

Unlike Indra, who "always protects against dangers", Varuṇa, although consecrated, is not expected to perform beneficial actions. There is, however, no trace of a *specific* degradation of Varuṇa in comparison with his status in the Veda. In one passage it is Indra who consecrates Varuṇa, viz. V.16.33–34: "Having thus pondered the Lord Mahendra Pākaśāsana, (consecrated) Kubera as the lord of all Yakṣas and of riches, Vivasvat's son as lord of the Pitaras, and also Varuṇa as lord of the water. Śakra, the grantor of wishes, thus gave him respectfully the overlordship" [300]. Although no direct connection need exist with the Rigvedic passage X.124.5, where Indra offers Varuṇa the (or, an) *ádhipatya* of his kingdom (see p. 29), the situation is remarkably similar. What has changed in the centuries that separated the epic period from the Vedic age is not so much Varuṇa's cosmic function as lord of the waters as rather man's attitude towards the cosmic law and its general status. Whereas Yama as *dharmarāja* in a way continues Varuṇa's function as *ṛtásya gopáḥ, dhármapatiḥ*, the general shift of emphasis from the

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ujjvalaḥ). In the classification the moon is associated with Varuṇa, as the sun is with Mitra. See Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde 107, p. 82 and cf. Mhbh. V.97.4 (in Varuṇa's abode) *ataḥ Somasya hāniś ca vṛddhiś caiva pradṛśyate* (for a different version see IX.34.40ff., where the moon is said to bathe in Prabhāsatīrtha). The moon is a vessel which is periodically refilled. In the same way, the ocean is replenished, for *tava* (which PW. VII, col. 1596, explains as standing for *tava samudrasya*) implies that Varuṇa and the sea are identical (just as in I.16.7–8, see p. 108). There seems to be a reference to high and low tide, the former being considered a periodical replenishment of the sea by the rivers. Hopkins, who recognized the importance of this passage, wrote (Epic Mythology, p. 117): "Varuṇa is formally consecrated by the gods as lord of rivers and waters (9,45,22; 46,105) and told that his home shall be in ocean, the home of *makaras*; that Ocean, the Lord of Rivers, shall be under his will, and that his own decline and growth shall agree with the waning and waxing of Soma. There seems to be actually no difference felt here (though expressed) between Ocean and Varuṇa." It should be added that elsewhere a distinction is made between the *apāṁ rājyam* and *mahodadhiḥ*. Cf. XII.122.26ff., where Śiva consecrates both Indra and Varuṇa: (26) *bhūyaḥ sa Bhagavān dhyātvā ciraṁ śūlavarāyudhaḥ, tasya tasya nikāyasya cakārai 'kaikam īśvaram* (27) *devānām īśvaraṁ cakre devaṁ daśaśatekṣaṇam, Yamaṁ vaivasvataṁ cāpi pitṝṇām akarot patim* (28) *dhanānāṁ rakṣasāṁ cāpi Kuberam api ce 'śvaram, parvatānāṁ patiṁ meruṁ saritāṁ ca mahodadhim* (29) *apāṁ rājye surāṇāṁ ca vidadhe Varuṇaṁ prabhum*, etc. Cf. also Bhāsa, Abhiṣekanāṭaka IV, discussed on p. 78. For *surāṇām* see below, n. 349.

[300] The text has been quoted above, p. 29. Since the syntactic structure is rather loose, no literal translation is possible.

gods of the organized cosmos to those gods who transcended the wider all-encompassing opposition of *sát* and *ásat*, of Cosmos and Chaos, also altered the character of sin. After the seasonal awakening of Viṣṇu as the god of the upper and the nether world had been projected to the gigantic dimensions of the god who periodically comes to this world to restore the *dharma*, and who even survives the total destruction of the world, sleeping on the Oceanic waters of Chaos, sin was no longer primarily considered an offense against Varuṇa. But this degradation was a consequence of the fading of the ancient notion of the ordered cosmos as based upon a contest of opposed powers.

It was only part of the general degradation of all those Vedic Devas who did not stand for the totality[301]. Once the religious consciousness had widened so as to include even the *ásat* of the Veda, the conception of the cosmic drama had so much changed as to deprive most Devas of their importance.

14. VARUṆA IN THE EPIC III: THE NETHER WORLD

In the epic Varuṇa is, as Lord of the Waters, one of the Devas[302], but, just as in the Veda, his most characteristic feature is his being the principal god of the nether world. It is significant that none of his epithets refers to this side of his nature. His is the world where the sun sets: "That place where the sun, O king, sets in accordance with truth, that men call the king of mountains Asta. King Varuṇa, living in that king of mountains and in the great ocean, *protects* the beings *(bhūta)*"[303]. That this is an old genuine trait of Varuṇa is apparent from the Vedic evidence[304]. The same localization is found in the account of Mātali's

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[301] A reservation must again be made for Śiva. If he, as Rudra, originally stood outside the sacrificial year, he may have been closely connected with Chaos. This problem, however, will not be considered here.

[302] E.g., in the Nala-episode, Mhbh. III.51.22, 52.4–5, 54.31, and in XII.29.16 *yasya sendrā savaruṇā bṛhaspatipurogamāḥ, devāḥ*, a reminiscence, it seems, of the older position of Indra and of the opposition of Bṛhaspati and Varuṇa in the brāhmaṇas. See above, p. 55 with n. 180.

[303] Mhbh. III.160.10 *yaṁ prāpya Savitā rājan satyena pratitiṣṭhati, astaṁ parvatarājānaṁ etam āhur manīṣiṇaḥ* (11) *etaṁ parvatarājānaṁ samudraṁ ca mahodadhim, āvasan Varuṇo rājā bhūtāni parirakṣati*. Cf. Oldenberg, Kleine Schriften, p. 702 n. 4 against Pischel, GGA. 1895, p. 449.

[304] KB. XVIII.6.10 (9 Lindner) *sa vā eṣo 'paḥ praviśya Varuṇo bhavati*, AS. XIII.3.13 *sá Váruṇaḥ sāyám Agnír bhavati*, RS. V.62.1, where Sūrya's horses are said to be unharnessed in Mitra's and Varuṇa's sacred abode. See Bergaigne III, p. 117, Hillebrandt, Lieder des Ṛgveda, p. 80 n. 2, Geldner, Religionsgeschichtliches Lesebuch, Heft 9, 2nd ed., p. 42, Renou, EVP. 5, p. 78, 7, pp. 40, 29 and JB. II.25, 13–14, where Varuṇa's region is associated with Ṛta and night: *mām abhy astamaye 'ti pratīcī dik prāyacchad ṛtaṁ ca rātriṁ ca*. Cf. History of Religions 10, p. 97. On the other hand, Thieme, Mitra and Aryaman, p. 71 and Renou, Festgabe für Herman Lommel, p. 125, explain the AS. passage as due to a secondary development. Gonda, The Vedic God Mitra, p. 42, only remarks that the KB. passage does not prove "a more or less exclusive, original or fundamental association of Varuṇa with night or the nocturnal heaven". This is correct but no-one, as far as I can see, has ever claimed this. See IIJ. 15, p. 226.

and Nārada's pilgrimage to Varuṇa's realm. Nārada here says to Mātali: "I will explain everything to you, while showing you the nether world. Then Mātali and Nārada, the magnanimous ones, both descending into the earth, saw the guardian of the region, the lord of the waters. Nārada explained to the charioteer all beings without exception, who lived inside the earth, as he knew them . . .". They then visit the world of the nāgas: "Taking leave of Varuṇa they roamed about in the *nāgaloka*". It is not said that this *nāgaloka* is different from Varuṇa's world. Cf. also V.106.12 "Here, living in Pātāla, Varuṇa got Śrī (good fortune)" [305].

Mythologically the (western) ocean and the subterranean water, which the Rigveda calls *samudrá*, are identical. They are also identified in Mhbh. I.19.3 "There they then saw the ocean *(samudra)*, the receptacle of water, the mine of all gems and the abode of Varuṇa, the lovely abode of the nāgas, the highest lord of the rivers, the habitation of the Pātāla-fire and the jail of the Asuras, and the frightener of beings, the sea, receptacle of water" [306]. In those passages where a distinction is made, "Varuṇa's abode", which is identical with the "World of Nāgas", is reached by a hole in the ground. In the tale of the sons of Sagara, who are sent out to find the sacrificial horse, we read: "Obeying this order, the sons of Sagara began again to search the whole earth. Then the heroes saw (a place where) the earth had been excavated. Having reached that hole and digging it, the sons of Sagara dug out the ocean with hoes and spades. This *abode of Varuṇa (varuṇālaya)*, being dug out by all Sāgaras, became very much afflicted as it was excavated on all sides. *Asuras, snakes (uraga), Rākṣasas* and all sorts of beings *(sattva)* gave cries of distress as they were killed by the sons of Sagara . . . While they thus dug out the ocean, the *abode of makaras*, a long time passed away but the horse did not appear. Thereupon the sons of Sagara, O king, enraged dug out Pātāla in the north-eastern region and there they saw the horse roaming about on the soil (lit. earth)" [307]. Just as in V.96.8 quoted above, where

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[305] Mhbh. V.96.5 *ahaṁ te sarvam ākhyāsye darśayan vasudhātalam* (6) *avagāhya tato bhūmim ubhau Mātalināradau, dadṛśāte mahātmānau lokapālam apāṁ patim* . . . (9) *Nāradaḥ sarvabhūtānām antarbhūminivāsinām, jānaṁś cakāra vyākhyānaṁ yantuḥ sarvam aśeṣataḥ*. Cf. also above n. 24 *in fine*, n. 61 and V.106.12 *atra pātālam āśritya Varuṇaḥ śriyam āpa ca*. Just as in the epic Pātāla is the capital of the *nāgaloka* (V.97.1), it is in classical literature an abode of snakes, cf. Kādambarī p. 92, lines 2–3 *pātālam iva mahākañcukisahasrādhyāsitam*.

[306] Mhbh. V.96.8 *Varuṇenā 'bhyanujñātau nāgalokaṁ viceratuḥ* and, e.g., I.19.3 *dadṛśāte tadā tatra samudraṁ nidhim ambhasām* (5) *ākaraṁ sarvaratnānām ālayaṁ Varuṇasya ca, nāgānām ālayaṁ ramyam uttamaṁ saritāṁ patim* (6) *pātālajvalanāvāsam Asurāṇāṁ ca bandhanam, bhayaṁkaraṁ ca sattvānāṁ payasāṁ nidhim arṇavam*, etc. See further in general Hopkins, Epic Mythology, p. 118f. On the other hand in III.101.8 the *udadhi* as Varuṇa's abode is apparently considered to be different from the Pātāla under the earth in III.103.12. The same notion that serpents and Dānavas dwell in the ocean in Pātāla (that is, accordingly, in the subterranean *samudra*) is met with in, e.g., Rām. VI.14.19.

[307] Mhbh. III.105.18 *pratigṛhya tu saṁdeśaṁ tatas te sagarātmajāḥ, bhūya eva mahīṁ kṛtsnāṁ vicetum upacakramuḥ* (19) *athā 'paśyanta te vīrāḥ pṛthivīm avadāritām, samāsādya bilaṁ tac ca khanantaḥ sagarātmajāḥ, kuddālair hreṣukaiś caiva samudram*

no clear distinction is made between Varuṇa's world and that of the serpents, this *varuṇālaya* is apparently identical with the *nāgaloka*, which has a similar entrance.

An interesting parallel can be found in the well-known Uttaṅka-episode of the epic[308]. In the former of the two relevant passages the entrance to the *nāgaloka* is a "wide, big hole" *(vivṛtaṁ mahābilam)*, in the latter, the serpent, having taken the two ear-rings in its mouth[309], disappears in an ant-hill, which is the entrance to the nether world. Since the abode of the Asuras under the earth is identical with that of the *nāgas* (as we shall see below), the *vivṛtam mahābilam* (Mhbh. I.3.137) and the *asuravivara*, a term used in classical literature for the entrance to the nether world, are synonyms. The latter word occurs at Daśakumāracarita, p. 41,1 ed. Agashe, whereas the much later Introduction (Pūrvapīṭhikā, pp. 14,3; 15,12, etc.) uses the uncharacteristic terms *bila*, *bilapatha*. The proper meaning of *asuravivara* was misunderstood by the 18th century commentator who glossed it with *pātāla*. In the Harṣacarita the word means "treasure cave" according to Thomas, JRAS. 31 (1899), p. 489. Cf. Kād. 227,2.

The ant-hill in the Uttaṅka-episode reminds us of the fact that there is an ancient connection between ants and Asuras: in the Atharvaveda the ant *upajīkā* is said to be a daughter of the Asuras (and a sister of the Devas!)[310]. Because the Asuras have fled under the earth, they have at an early date become the prototype of diggers[311], who bury a remedy (AS. VI.109.3) or a charm (ŚB. III.5.4.3 *kṛtyām ... ní cakhnur*, cf. AS. V.31.8). In the later belief that a digger of pools attains Varuṇa's

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akhanaṁs tadā (20) *sa khanyamānaḥ sahitaiḥ sāgarair Varuṇālayaḥ, agacchat paramām ārtiṁ dāryamāṇaḥ samantataḥ* (21) *asuroragarakṣāṁsi sattvāni vividhāni ca, ārtanādam akurvanta vadhyamānāni sāgaraiḥ ...* (23) *evaṁ hi khanatāṁ teṣāṁ samudraṁ makarālayam, vyatītaḥ sumahān kālo na cā 'śvaḥ samadṛśyata* (24) *tataḥ pūrvottare deśe samudrasya mahīpate, vidārya pātālam atha saṁkruddhāḥ sagarātmajāḥ, apaśyanta hayaṁ tatra vicarantaṁ mahītale.*

[308] Cf. Mhbh. I.3.137 *sa* (viz. *śramaṇaḥ*) *tad rūpaṁ vihāya takṣakarūpaṁ kṛtvā sahasā dharaṇyāṁ vivṛtaṁ mahābilaṁ viveśa* (138) *praviśya ca nāgalokaṁ svabhavanam agacchat. tam Uttaṅko 'nvāviveśa tenaiva bilena;* (158) *tābhir nāgaloko dhūpitaḥ,* XIV.57.21 *apaśyad bhujagaḥ kaścit te tatra maṇikuṇḍale* (22) *Airāvatakulotpannaḥ śīghro bhūtvā tadā sa vai, vidaśyā 'syena valmīkaṁ viveśā 'tha sa kuṇḍale* (26) *tataḥ khanata evātha viprarṣer dharaṇītalam, nāgalokasya panthānaṁ kartukāmasya niścayāt* (27) *rathena hariyuktena taṁ deśam upajagmivān, vajrapāṇir mahātejā dadarśa ca dvijottamam* (28) ... *Uttaṅkam abravīt: tāta naitac chakyaṁ tvaye 'ti vai* (29) *ito hi nāgaloko vai yojanāni sahasraśaḥ ...* (32) *tato vajraprahārais tair dāryamāṇā vasuṁdharā, nāgalokasya panthānam akaroj Janamejaya* (33) *sa tena mārgeṇa tadā nāgalokaṁ viveśa ha* ... For Takṣaka see also n. 339.

[309] The reading *sa kuṇḍale* (Bombay ed. and crit. ed.) makes it necessary to take *kuṇḍale* as the object of *vidaśya*. Otherwise PW. pw., whose interpretation of this passage is based on the different reading of the Calcutta edition.

[310] AS. VI.100.3 *Ásurāṇāṁ duhitā 'si sá devānām asi svásā, divás pṛthivyáḥ sáṁbhūtā sá cakarthā 'rasáṁ viṣám.*

[311] AS. II.3.3 *nīcaíḥ khananty Ásurāḥ,* VI.109.3 *Ásurās tvā nyàkhanan devás tvó 'davapan púnaḥ.*

world[312] we find, again, a connection between Varuṇa's world and the Asuras, which will be discussed in the next section. In this context it is interesting to note that the "ants are endowed with the faculty of producing water"[313], which must be due to the fact that as "diggers" they were associated with the nether world and Varuṇa's subterranean water. Hence in a charm undertaken with springwater (AS. II.3.4) it is said that the *upajīkā*-ants bring up the remedy from the "sea" *(úd bharanti samudrād ádhi)*, where, "deep down", the Asuras bury it (v. 3 *nīcaiḥ khananti)*.

This side of Varuṇa's character is still seen in the Purāṇas, where Varuṇa is the king of the waters "uniquement lorsqu'il s'agit de rites de consécration des puits, mares et réservoirs"[314]. It has been pointed out elsewhere that the name *Varuṇadeva*, used in medieval times for stone slabs of wells in Chamba State[315] reflects the same conception of Varuṇa as a god residing in the nether world. This idea can be traced back to RS. VIII.69.12 "Thou art a good god, O Varuṇa, as thy seven rivers stream through (along) the hollow of thy mouth as through a hollow pipe"[316]. Just because Varuṇa could obstruct the water (cf. Vṛtra), he is denoted by the auspicious term *sudevá* "a good, auspicious god" – an instance of word-magic[317]. While allowing the water to spring forth from

[312] Viṣṇusmṛti 41.2. Such a digger may have been supposed to be digging "beyond the earth", as the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa puts it (I.237 *pareṇa pṛthivīm . . . anūtkhāya*). Cf. TS. VI.3.4.2 *pitṛdevatyàṁ hy ètád yán níkhātam*.

[313] Bloomfield, SBE. 42, p. 278 (referring to Kauśika Sūtra 25).

[314] See M.-Th. de Mallmann, Les enseignements iconographiques de l'Agni-Purāṇa, p. 132, who refers to Agni-Purāṇa 64 *(kūpādi)*, and cf. History of Religions 10, p. 98.

[315] See above, n. 87.

[316] See above, p. 27. The current interpretation of *sudevó asi varuṇa yásya te saptá síndhavaḥ, anukṣáranti kākúdaṁ sūrmyàṁ suṣirám iva* is hardly correct. Geldner translates (like Ludwig and Grassmann) "in dessen Schlund die sieben Ströme fliessen wie in eine hohle Röhre", which disregards the specific meaning of *ánu*. Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 19, thinks that this stanza has no mythological importance at all, whereas Lüders, Varuṇa, p. 53, interprets it as saying that Varuṇa drinks much Soma. Actually, the stanza should be paralleled with VIII.41.2, where Varuṇa is said to be dwelling "at the origin of the rivers, with seven sisters, (himself) amidst (them)" (*yáḥ síndhūnām úpo 'dayé saptásvasā sá madhyamó*, for which see Lüders, p. 412) and the other passages quoted in India Maior (Congratulatory Volume J. Gonda), p. 151. It is interesting that MS. IV.7.8 (104,9) quotes this stanza in support of *samudró vaí Váruṇaḥ* "Varuṇa is the (subterranean) ocean". Cf. also Thieme, Kleine Schriften, p. 620 and German Scholars on India, p. 334.

[317] Not "ein rechter Gott" (Lüders, Varuṇa, p. 54, who interprets the word as referring to Varuṇa's drinking much Soma). It should be noted that the stanza is recited in order to be delivered from Varuṇa (MS. IV.7.8 *nirvaruṇatvâya*). Elsewhere the word is mostly a bahuvrīhi but cf. ŚB. VII.5.2.52 *sudevó adyá tád vidyād yátra nirvápaṇaṁ dadhúḥ*. The idea that Varuṇa releases the subterranean water is indissolubly linked up with the certainty that he also could detain it. Cf. in this connection RS. X.124.7 "without being compelled Varuṇa released the waters" *(áprabhūtī Váruṇo nír apáḥ sṛjat)*. See Bergaigne, III, pp. 127, 148, Renou, EVP. 7, p. 5 (otherwise H. Güntert, Der arische Weltkönig, p. 287). However, I now have my doubts about the explanation suggested in IIJ. 5, p. 52 for the name *Varuṇadeva*, which in medieval times was given to the stone slabs of wells in Chamba State. They need not necessarily owe their name to the obstructive character of Varuṇa.

the earth he represents the Mitra-aspect of the dual deity[318], which also explains the use of *sudânavaḥ* with reference to the three Ādityas (including Mitra!). Since *dânu* specifically denoted the primordial and the subterranean water, the epithet meant either "whose water is auspicious" or, perhaps "well (bounteously) giving water"[319]. It has been one of Lüders's important observations that only conjointly with Mitra Varuṇa is said to give rain[320]. This confirms the conclusion that the specific Varuṇa-aspect was the one which obstructed the water. Mythologically, this water was both the spring-water and the rain-water falling down during the night. While it is clear that drawing water from a well must have meant drawing it from Varuṇa's dwelling-place, the taboo which forbade drawing water at night[321] is not immediately clear. The texts say this was prohibited because at night the spring-water was "in Varuṇa". Whatever they may have meant by these words, it may be suggested that the original motive was that at night Varuṇa and the subterranean water were in the sky so that what was drawn up from a well at that time was not Varuṇa's water.

From the passages quoted it may be inferred that the poets, unless they expressly associated Varuṇa's palace *(sabhā)* with the western ocean (in accordance with the system of classification)[322], located the god in the *nāgaloka* at the lower end of the world axis. However, the association of Varuṇa with the quarter of the setting sun, although understandable enough, could easily overshadow the basic notion that Varuṇa's true place in the cosmos was in the nadir, at the roots of the world tree. Some later descriptions such as in Rāmāyaṇa VI.14–15 cr. ed., may give the impression of being mixtures of two different pictures, the *varuṇālaya* being identified with the *makarālaya* and the sea[323]. It would require a separate study to determine if, and in how far, they are mixed up but

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[318] See IIJ. 5, pp. 51–53.

[319] For *sudânavaḥ* see Lüders, p. 716, for *dânu* cf. Hist. of Rel. 10, p. 122.

[320] Varuṇa, p. 716: "Meistens ist aber Varuṇa, wenn er Regen spendet, mit Mitra verbunden", and p. 719: "Oft wird Varuṇa auch um Regen angerufen, gewöhnlich zusammen mit Mitra".

[321] See J. J. Meyer, Trilogie altindischer Mächte und Feste der Vegetation III, p. 207 n.l. A simpler explanation would be that, since Varuṇa is a god of the night and of the water, his power over the waters is at night still more dreaded. For the rain falling during night see India Maior, p. 150f.

[322] The inevitable result of assigning every deity to one of the five or seven quarters was a potential conflict between the place of a god in the system of classification and the place which he naturally occupied (see IIJ. 13, p. 283). The identification of Varuṇa's home with the (western) ocean must have been due to the system (and his special relation to the setting sun) but theoretically Varuṇa was the lord of all the four oceans which in the mythical cosmology surrounded the earth.

[323] Cf. Rām. VI.14.13, 278*, 280* *varuṇālaya* beside VI.14.8 and 11 *makarālaya*. The same notions are connected in Mhbh. III.105.20 versus 23, see n. 307; cf. also Mhbh. III.101.8–9, where *varuṇālaya=udadhi ghora*. In the Rāmāyaṇa the Pātāla is said to be in the *sāgara* (VI.14.19, App. I.11.2), which is the dwelling-place of the Dānavas (*dānavālaya* VI, App. I.11.8). The *rasātala* is also located there (VII.23.3).

this much would seem certain that in the older literature the *samudrá* in Varuṇa's world was, ever since RS. VII.88.3, primarily (and perhaps exclusively) the subterranean water. See p. 26f.).

We have seen above that in the Mahābhārata Varuṇa's abode *(varuṇālaya)* is identical with the world of the serpents *(nāgaloka)*, in which the town Pātāla, situated in the very cosmic centre [324], is Varuṇa's dwelling-place [325]. Here are "Asuric" forms of Agni and Soma and here is the moon [326]. The latter belongs here as a consequence of the classification upon which the mythic cosmology is based, viz. sun : day-time sky : upper world versus moon : night-time sky : nether world. This led to identifying the water under the earth and the underworld jar with nocturnal sky and the moon [327]. Classificatorily the second group consists of different aspects or manifestations of Varuṇa's world. While every morning Varuṇa

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[324] Mhbh. V.97.1 *etat tu nāgalokasya nābhisthāne sthitaṁ puram, Pātālam iti vikhyātaṁ daityadānavasevitam.*

[325] See notes 305–307.

[326] See Mhbh. V.97.3–4 (quoted in n. 68) and IX.46.8 (above, p. 79). The idea is that the gods after winning the *amṛta* at the Churning of the Ocean and drinking from it gave it to guardians of the nether world to guard it there. The same idea is also found in the tale of the Churning of the Ocean, cf. I.17.30 *dadau rakṣitum.* This is a detail that has arisen in the Vedic period among authors of Yajurvedic texts. Its genesis can be reconstructed (see Études Asiatiques 25, p. 90) but it is only a secondary variant of the original idea that the *sóma/amṛta* had to be won from the primordial world. See p. 17 and e.g., IIJ. 15, p. 231. For the *āsura agni* see Mhbh. I.19.6 *pātālajvalana* and RS. III.29.11 *gárbha āsuró* (n. 68), and cf. IIJ. 8, p. 111, above p. 19ff. For the waxing and waning moon *(Soma)* see above, n. 299.

[327] For the *vāruṇa kumbha* (Agni-Purāṇa 64.4) cf. Varuṇa represented as sitting beside a *kumbha* on a relief of Badami (see p. 146f.). The symbolism of the cosmic tree rooted in the *kumbha* was, it seems, more common in Khmer and Indonesian art, see J. Auboyer, Le symbolisme du trône, p. 97, F. D. K. Bosch, The Golden Germ, An Introduction to Indian Symbolism (Indo-Iranian Monographs, vol. II), 1960, pp. 110–113, 156f. In India the bowl is usually filled with lotus leaves, which can be extended upwards, "especially when narrow vertical spaces are available," "to a considerable height, either as a conventional candelabra-like tree, or as a long spray of lotus" (A. K. Coomaraswamy, Yakṣas II (1931), p. 62). The tree seems to be comparatively rare (Bosch gives only one example on plate 83, a painting in the Joganmohan Palace, Mysore). As a rule the symbol of the world axis is represented not as a tree but as the cosmic pillar *(stambha)*. Some illustrations are the stone pillar crowned by the solar wheel depicted on a pilaster in Sarnath and the pillar *cum* foliage arising from a bowl in a relief from the Hazāra Ramachandra temple, Hampi, see reproduction in Prithvi K. Agrawala, Pūrṇa Kalaśa or the Vase of Plenty (Varanasi, 1965), plate XXI and figure 19. E. B. Havell, A Handbook of Indian Art (1920/1927), p. 43, had rightly recognized that "The vase forming the base of the pillar stood for the cosmic waters." James Burgess, Indian Antiquary 12 (1883), p. 321, reported about a South-Indian ritual in which "a decorated kumbha represents king Varuṇa" (quoted by Coomaraswamy, Yakṣas II, p. 62 n. 2). Cf. the mantra used in pouring water into a vessel: *astu rājā Varuṇo revatībhiḥ* (Āśv. GS. II.9.5). That the bell-shaped capital represents the inverted cask on top of the world axis in the nocturnal sky is now contested by John Irwin, Burlington Magazine 117 (1975), p. 636f. For further references concerning the *pūrṇaghaṭa* see M.-Th. de Mallmann, Les enseignements iconographiques de l'Agnipurāṇa p. 242f. and below, ch. II n. 232.

and Mitra liberate the sun after its "Nachtweg" through their world, the moon, whether visible or not, permanently belongs to Varuṇa's realm. From the latter's close connection with the serpents it can be understood that while in the Rigveda Varuṇa must have been thought to hold the roots of the world tree and thus to support the universe, in the epic it is the world serpent Śeṣa who has taken over this function [328].

The location of Pātāla as the dwelling-place of the Daityas-Dānavas in the nadir (that is, at the lower end of the world axis) in Mhbh. V.97.1 is also met with in Sāyaṇa's commentary on ŚB. I.4.1.34. The brāhmaṇa here tells how the Devas and Asuras were contending to win Gāyatrī, while the latter was standing between the two parties [329]. The author of the brāhmaṇa equates Gāyatrī with the earth, which can, indeed, be considered to be between heaven (Devas) and the nether world (Asuras). In this connection the commentator has the following remark: "For on the top of the (cosmic mountain) Meru is the town named Amarāvatī; for in it the gods are dwelling. And so, the town that is situated under the Meru is named Irāmukha. In it, indeed, the Asuras are dwelling. Between these two there is the earth ..." [330]. Cf. Mhbh. V.108.9, where Varuṇa's realm is said to be the foundation *(mūla)* of the Himālaya. The common name Pātāla is again found in the Paiśācī-passage of the Kuvalayamālā (§ 139), which runs as follows: "More delightful is the King of Mountains, the Mountain of the thirty(-three Gods), where the divine damsels wandering at their sweet will sing the praises of their lovers' lineages, where even the Pātāla drips with the sweat of their joy,

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[328] See IIJ. 8, p. 108 and cf. Mhbh. V.101.2 *eṣa Śeṣaḥ sthito nāgo yene 'yaṁ dhāryate sadā ... mahī*, VII.69.48 *adhastād dharaṇīṁ yo 'sau sadā dhārayate nṛpa, sa Śeṣaḥ pannagaśreṣṭhaḥ*. For *adhastāt* see above, n. 183 on TS. V.5.9.4 *devás tvé 'ndrajyeṣṭhā váruṇarājāno 'dhástāc co 'páriṣṭāc ca pāntu*. For Varuṇa's connection with the world axis in the Rigveda cf. VIII.41.10bc *yó skambhéna ví ródasī ajó ná dyáṁ ádhārayat* (like the god Dhartṛ in the centre AS XVIII.3.29). The later replacement of Varuṇa in this function by Śeṣa, the underworld aspect of the god of cosmic totality, is quite in keeping with the general evolution of Indian religion as sketched above, p. 40. For Varuṇa's connection with the serpents see below, n. 332, Shendge BDCRI. 9, p. 281, G. Johnsen, IIJ. 9, p. 260, M.-Th. de Mallmann, Les enseignements iconographiques de l'Agni-Purāṇa, p. 132 n. 2 (Varuṇa represented with a snake in his hand), ŚB. III.1.1.7 (in the classification system the snakes are in the West: *yá pratīcī sá sarpáṇām*) and, e.g., Mhbh. II.9.8, where Vāsuki and Takṣaka attend on Varuṇa in his *sabhā)*. As for the world tree, which belonged to both the nether world and the upper world, it was in a way both the samrāj Varuṇa and (during the New Year festival, as Indradhvaja) Indra (see p. 138). This may have been meant by AS. VI.86.3 *samrā́ḍ asy ásurāṇām ... devā́nām ardhabhā́g asi*.

[329] A different version occurs in MS. II.1.11 (13,8), where the Gāyatrī is identified with the year (line 14 *saṁvatsaró vaí gāyatrī́*).

[330] Sāyaṇa ad ŚB. I.4.1.34 *Meror agrabhāge hi Amarāvatī nāma nagarī, tasyāṁ hi devāḥ. tathā Meror adhastādbhāge ca yad [yat, Weber] Irāmukhaṁ nāma nagaraṁ. tasmin hy Asurā nivasanti*. The name Irāmukha for Pātāla is only found here (PW. pw.). Other names, such as Hiraṇyapura (name of the capital of Pātāla), occur in the Mahābhārata.

and where the broad slabs of gold are chequered with red lotus-flowers" [331].

Two characteristic traits emerge from the evidence quoted: first, a close relation between Varuṇa and the snakes (already apparent from the fact that his home is in, or near, the "world of serpents" *(nāgaloka)* and, secondly, a relation between the god and the Asuras. As for the first point [332], the earliest traces of a connection between Varuṇa and serpents occur in the Atharvaveda, in V.13.1 "Varuṇa, the *kavi* of heaven, has given (them) to me. I dissolve thy poison with powerful spells" [333]. In the epic the presence of serpents is a common feature in descriptions of Varuṇa's abode, both in the Mahābhārata and, e.g., in Rāmāyaṇa VII, where they are mentioned side by side with the Daityas [334].

There is, indeed, also a close connection between Asuras and serpents which confirms that there was a well-established tradition that Varuṇa, the *nāgas* and the Asuras all had the nether world for their home. Hopkins, remarks that "The Nāgas, though distinct from Asuras, are as a group affiliated, living with them and fighting on their side... and generally the Asuras and Nāgas belong together, though numerous exceptions occur in the case of the nāgas" [335]. Sometimes, indeed, the distinction between *nāgas* and Daityas is of vital importance, see n. 24 *(in fine)*. It is this relation of Varuṇa to the Asuras (Daityas, Dānavas) that will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.

15. VARUṆA IN THE EPIC IV: THE ASURAS IN VARUṆA'S WORLD

In several passages quoted above there was a reference to Asuras (or Daityas, Dānavas, etc.) in Varuṇa's world. A difficulty is, however, that in the epic the notions about the nether world have not yet been systematized (see, e.g., Hopkins, Epic Mythology, p. 119) and that it is not always clear how Varuṇa's world is delimitated with regard to other parts of the nether world. In Varuṇa's *sabhā* there are Nāgas and many kings of the Daityas (II.11.44), in the *varuṇālaya* there are Asuras, Serpents *(uraga)* and Rākṣasas, all kinds of beings (III.105.21) and Rām. VII.23.3 depicts the Rasātala, which is often identified with Pātāla, as inhabited by Daityas and Serpents, while it is guarded by Varuṇa. Although Varuṇa is seldom mentioned in direct connection with Pātāla

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[331] Kuvalayamālā § 139 (p. 71, line 15 in the edition by Upadhye, Singhi Jain Series Nr. 45). Cf. IIJ. 1, p. 237 n. 6.

[332] See n. 328.

[333] AS. V.13.1 *dadír hí máhyaṁ Váruṇo diváḥ kavír vácobhir ugraír ní riṇāmi te viṣám.* Cf. Bloomfield, SBE. 42, p. 27. Shendge's statement that Varuṇa "has an authority over the serpent-world" is virtually based on this single passage, since X.4.1 and 16 do not prove much in this respect. See Shendge, BDCRI. 9 (1949), p. 281. AS III.27.3 is a "snake charm according to Western scholars" (Shendge, p. 281 and n. 2). See Bloomfield, The Atharvaveda, p. 81.

[334] Cf. Rāmāyaṇa VII.23.4–6.

[335] Epic Mythology, p. 47.

(V.106.12 *atra pātālam āśritya Varuṇaḥ śriyam āpa ca*), the picture that emerges from Mātali's visit to the nether world (Mhbh. V.96 ff.) is interesting. Under Nārada's guidance he first greets Varuṇa. They then roam about in the *nāgaloka* (96.8), which is the abode of the Lord of waters (96.10 *udakapateḥ sthānam*). Apparently this is not considered different from Varuṇa's world (cf. p. 82 and n. 339). Here they see all the weapons of the Daiteyas who have been robbed of their kingdom (96.15) and Varuṇa's umbrella, from which cool and pure water drips and flows to a place to which no human eye can reach (96.23f.). They then enter Pātāla, the 'town' *(puram !)* in the centre of *nāgaloka*, which is inhabited by Daityas and Dānavas (97.1 and 6). Here the Asuric fire, the moon and the amṛta are hidden and here, too, the Daiteyas who enjoyed *adharma* lived emprisoned after Indra had deprived them of their *śrī* (96.11). The next place which they visit, however, is the town *(puravara)* Hiraṇyapura in Pātāla (*pātālam āśritam* 98.2). Here the Daityas, Dānavas and Asuras, always given to hostility *(vaira)*, live unrestrained because none of the four *lokapālas* (including Indra and Varuṇa!) are able to bring them under control (98.4). Obviously we have here entered a world beyond the pale, outside the ordered world, but the demons, living in crystal palaces, are not hampered by guilty feelings and the text does not state that their world is anyhow separated from the rest of the nether world. After a short visit to Garuḍa's world, somewhat unexpected in this region (but see IIJ.8, p. 110), they finally enter the town Bhogavatī which, according to a formulaic verse (V.101.1, 107.19, Rām. VII.23.4), is guarded by Vāsuki. Here Śeṣa "always carries the earth" (see IIJ.8, p. 108). Here, again, there are Nāgas. Since one expects to find Śeṣa at the lower end of the world axis, this looks like a replica of the Pātāla of V.97.

In V.108 there is another description, which this time follows the cosmic classification and thus situates Varuṇa's world in the West. See on the conflict between the classification and the "functional place" of a god IIJ.13, p. 283. Here is Varuṇa's *pratiṣṭhā* and "beginning" (108.1). Kaśyapa, representative of the totality, has consecrated Varuṇa as *rājā* of the sea-monsters *(yādas)* and guardian of the waters (108.3). The moon waxes here, as it drinks Varuṇa's six *rasa*s. Here are (or were?) the Daityas who, having been surpassed and fettered by the Wind, have been asleep *(suṣupuḥ)*, hissing while they were tortured by the great Nāgas (108.5). The sun sets here and from here Night and Sleep spread at the end of a day. Here is the root of the world axis, Mount Mandara (108.9 *atra mūlaṁ himavato mandaraṁ yāti śāśvatam*), which is obviously an attempt to bring the classification system in harmony with the notion of cosmic centre.

In Rām. VII.23 it is related how Rāvaṇa, after having been killed by Rāma, first goes to Yama's realm, where he slays Yama, and then goes to Varuṇa's abode (VII.23.16). This is an instance of the specifically epic conception which Hopkins formulated in the words "A dead or defeated demon goes to Varuṇālaya as naturally as a dead man goes to Yamasādana"

(see p. 74).[336] The first trace of the transfer of Varuṇa's function to Yama, however, can be found in the Rigveda, e.g., IX.113.8[337].

The presence of demons in Varuṇa's home may at first sight seem somewhat puzzling because the demons have been driven from "these worlds" (plural, see n. 24), whereas Varuṇa's abode must have formed part of "these worlds". The position of the Ādityas among the Devas is in itself sufficient proof for their belonging to the ordered cosmos. So the idea of demons dwelling in Varuṇa's world must have offered some difficulties to the epic poets. The question naturally arises how they visualized this presence of the demons. The answer is twofold.

On the one hand, one meets with the notion that Varuṇa in his *sabhā* is not only surrounded by the Ādityas, but also respectfully worshipped by Daityas and Dānavas, "adorned with brilliant ear-rings"[338]. He is an object of worship for various *bhūtas* (see nn. 289, 303), which term may comprise the spirits and "devils". It is not surprising that also Vāsuki and Takṣaka, the kings of serpents, are there, along with other Nāgas[339], since this is the natural consequence of the identity of (or, close relationship between) *varuṇālaya* and *nāgaloka*, and of Varuṇa's lordship over the serpents.

Varuṇa's world appears to be the *refuge* for demons after they have been slain (e.g. Rāvaṇa) or expelled from the earth: "The great Asuras, afflicted by the gods, entered the earth and the sea of saltish water"[340]. Lomaśa relates that the Kāleyas at first were Vṛtra's allies (III.98.3ff.). After seeing Vṛtra slain by Indra, they fly into Varuṇa's abode, but at night they come back to kill seers and to destroy "people" (or, "the worlds"). Because the sea is their refuge, they are unassailable[341]. This passage is instructive in that it openly depicts Varuṇa's abode as a source of evil, the underlying idea apparently being that Varuṇa *protects* the

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[336] Epic Mythology, p. 119.

[337] *yátra rājā vaivasvató yátrā 'varódhanaṁ diváḥ, yátrā 'mūr yahvátīr āpas tátra mām amṛtaṁ kṛdhi.*

[338] Mhbh. II.9.7 *Ādityās tatra Varuṇaṁ jaleśvaram upāsate*, 9.15 *daityadānavasaṁghāś ca sarve rucirakuṇḍalāḥ . . .* (17) *te tasyāṁ Varuṇaṁ devaṁ dharmapāśadharaṁ sadā, upāsate . . .*

[339] See Mhbh. II.9.8 *Vāsukis Takṣakaś caiva nāgāś cai 'rāvatas tathā . . .* (11) *ete cā 'nye ca bahavaḥ sarpās tasyāṁ Yudhiṣṭhira, upāsate mahātmānaṁ Varuṇaṁ vigataklamāḥ* and III.42.6, where Varuṇa is surrounded *nāgair nadair nadībhiś ca Daityaiḥ Sādhyaiś ca daivataiḥ*. The *nāgaloka* into which Takṣaka enters (see n. 308) must, accordingly, have been Varuṇa's world. For the Sādhyas residing in the nadir see the Excursus. The nāgas belong to the ordered cosmos, cf., e.g., p. 88 and n. 24 *in fine*.

[340] Mhbh. I.17.28 *tato mahīṁ lavaṇajalaṁ ca sāgaraṁ mahāsurāḥ praviviśur arditāḥ suraiḥ.*

[341] Mhbh. III.101.7ff.: *Kāleya iti vikhyāto gaṇaḥ paramadāruṇaḥ, taiś ca Vṛtraṁ samāśritya jagat sarvaṁ prabādhitam* (8) *te Vṛtraṁ nihataṁ dṛṣṭvā sahasrākṣeṇa dhīmatā, jīvitaṁ parirakṣantaḥ praviṣṭā varuṇālayam* (9) *te praviśyo 'dadhiṁ ghoraṁ nakragrāhasamākulam, utsādanārthaṁ lokānāṁ rātrau ghnanti munīn iha* (10) *na tu śakyāḥ kṣayaṁ netuṁ samudrāśrayagā hi te, samudrasya kṣaye buddhir bhavadbhiḥ saṁpradhāryatām.* Cf. also III.99.21 *samāśritya mahormimantaṁ ratnākaraṁ Varuṇasyā 'layaṁ sma* and 100.1 *samudraṁ te samāśritya vāruṇaṁ nidhiṁ ambhasām.*

evil-doers, who at night attack the world of order. Cf. also Mhbh. III.160.11 "he protects the *bhūtas*" *(bhūtāni parirakṣati)* and Rām. VII.23.3, where Varuṇa is said to protect the Rasātala, dwelling-place of the Daityas and serpents (p. 88). It may be noted in passing that the notion of *niśācaras* "(demons) moving about by night" has its roots in the Vedic ideas about rakṣases[342]. After being defeated by the Devas those of the Asuras who survived the slaughter split up the earth and vanished in the Pātāla[343]. Their defeat seems to have changed their position fundamentally. They live on[344] in the nether world as exiles (III.101.8, 103.12), no longer protected by Varuṇa. Similar accounts are found elsewhere, e.g. in the Matsyapurāṇa, where the Dānavas flee into the *rasātala* or *pātāla* (the two terms are here used optionally)[345]. In the Kāleya-episode of the Mahābhārata there is, accordingly, a difference between the spontaneous flight in the beginning, during which they are in Varuṇa's abode and their second flight into the Pātāla, where Varuṇa is not mentioned by name. However, whether the author of this episode recognized this or not, Pātāla is also Varuṇa's abode (V. 106.12) at the bottom of the world-tree. So some kind of relation must have continued to exist between the dispelled demons and Varuṇa.

Just as in the Veda (n. 24), the demons are driven away from the earth[346]. But the epic bards, like the Vedic theologians (p. 34), were confronted by the dilemma that the demons, though dispelled, cannot be definitively destroyed. As Mhbh. III.98.3–5 puts it, the Dānavas and Asuras in Hiraṇyapuram cannot be killed by Śakra, nor by Varuṇa, Yama or Dhanada (Kubera). Similarly Rām. VII.23.10. In XIII.140.3ff. the gods defeated by the Asuras wander about on earth till they see Agastya. At their request he burns the Dānavas with the fire of his *tejas*. By thousands they fall down from the atmosphere on earth but others "leaving the two worlds" go to the South *(kāṣṭhāṁ dakṣiṇām)*, where Bali is just performing the horse-sacrifice under(?) the earth *(mahīṁgataḥ* or *mahīṁ gataḥ)*[347]. The Asuras who are under and in the earth *(mahīstha)* are not burnt. When the gods ask Agastya to kill them, too *(bhūmiṣṭhān asurāñ jahi)*, he declares himself unable to burn the *mahīgata* Asuras.

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[342] KS. X.5 (129,19) *āmāvasyàṁ vaí rấtrīṁ niśí rákṣāṁsi prérate* (Caland: *prerate* [?]), TS. II.2.2.3 *niśitāyāṁ hí rákṣāṁsi preráte*. Cf. II.4.1.1 and Geldner, Ved. Studien II, p. 167 n. 1.

[343] Mhbh. III.103.12–13 *hataśeṣās tataḥ kecit Kāleyā manujottama, vidārya vasudhāṁ devīṁ Pātālatalam āśritāḥ* (13) *nihatān Dānavān dṛṣṭvā tridaśā munipuṁgavam, tuṣṭuvur vividhair vākyair idaṁ caivā 'bruvan vacaḥ.*

[344] Incorrect Hopkins, Epic Mythology, p. 119.

[345] E.g., Matsyapurāṇa 47.63, 212, 233 *(viviśus te rasātalam*, viz. *Dānavāḥ)* and 47.68, 215 *Pātālam.*

[346] Cf. Mhbh. I.58.25ff. *(so tasmāl lokād iha cyutaḥ).*

[347] The crit. ed. (śl. 12) reads *mahīgatān*. Sørensen, Index, p. 17a, rightly translates *mahīṁ gataḥ* by "in the nether regions". Neither *mahīṁgata* nor *mahīstha (mahiṣṭha)* is recorded in the Petersburg dictionaries, but cf. PW. *bhūmiṣṭha* "in the earth" and *bhūtā bhūmisaṁsthitāḥ*, IIJ. 15, p. 177.

Varuṇa's character is accordingly basically ambiguous. Although he never ceases to be a Deva nor is called an Asura or king of the Asuras [348], some variant readings testify to an uncertainty, at least among some copyists, about the god's nature. In VIII.30.77 the critical edition reads *pratīcīṁ Varuṇaḥ pāti pālayānaḥ surān balī* "Varuṇa the mighty one, guards the western region, protecting the gods" but the Bombay edition (VIII.45.32) has here a different reading *pālayann asurān balī* "protecting the Asuras". A similar variant, which is *mythologically* the *lectio difficilior*, occurs in the Calcutta edition XII.4497 *apāṁ rājye 'surāṇāṁ ca vidadhe Varuṇaṁ prabhum* "(Viṣṇu) (installed him) as king over the water and made him lord of the Asuras" [349].

While in the passages here referred to the ambiguity of Varuṇa's nature was more or less openly acknowledged and left unsolved – and insoluble it was, indeed – there are other passages where Varuṇa is depicted as a warder of the imprisoned demons. Mythologically this must, in the light of the preceding observations, be considered a rationalistic attempt to explain away the dark aspects in Varuṇa's relation to the banished demons. Such a passage is Mhbh. V.126.44ff., where the highest god Prajāpati orders god Dharma to fetter the Daityas and Dānavas and to hand them over to Varuṇa. The latter fetters them also with his own nooses *(pāśa)* and guards them henceforth in the sea [350]. Less clear is the situation in III.42.6, where Varuṇa, surrounded by Nāgas, rivers, Daityas and Sādhyas is coming to Arjuna, but then tells him that he has fettered thousands of *Daiteyas* by means of his nooses [351]. The ocean which Kadrū and Vinatā are watching (I.19.6) is described in the words

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[348] Kings of the Asuras and Dānavas are, e.g., Bali, Śambara and Vṛtra, the last of whom is often called *Asurapravīra*, e.g. XII.271.44. This function of Vṛtra is already met with in the Veda, see MS. IV.3.4 (42,14) and cf. Geldner, Vedische Studien II, p. 299 n. 3.

[349] The text-critical problem has, of course, to be judged by its own criteria. In XII.122.29 the critical edition reads *apāṁ rājye surāṇāṁ ca vidadhe Varuṇaṁ prabhum* (see n. 299) and records only one variant reading *'marāṇāṁ* in a single manuscript. But the writing or omitting of the *avagraha* was largely left to the discretion of the copyists, who besides used it in a way different from what has become usual in modern printed texts. So reading *'surāṇām* for *surāṇām* can hardly be called an emendation. Moreover Varuṇa is not, as a rule, said to be a protector of the gods. In IX.46.11–12 (see p. 80) he protects "the rivers, seas and lakes just as Indra protects the gods." The reading of the Calcutta edition *'surāṇāṁ . . . prabhum* "lord of the Asuras" certainly makes better sense.

[350] Mhbh. V.126.44ff. *iti matvā 'bravīd Dharmaṁ parameṣṭhī Prajāpatiḥ, Varuṇāya prayacchai 'tān baddhvā Daiteyadānavān* (45) *evam uktas tato Dharmo niyogāt parameṣṭhinaḥ, Varuṇāya dadau sarvān baddhvā Daiteyadānavān* (47) *tān baddhvā dharmapāśaiś ca svaiś ca pāśair jaleśvaraḥ, Varuṇaḥ sāgare yatto nityaṁ rakṣati Dānavān.*

[351] Mhbh. III.42.5f. *tato vaiḍūryavarṇābho bhāsayan sarvato diśaḥ, yādogaṇavṛtaḥ śrīmān ājagāma jaleśvaraḥ* (6) *nāgair nadair nadībhiś ca Daityaiḥ Sādhyaiś ca daivataiḥ, Varuṇo Yādasāṁ bhartā vaśī taṁ deśam āgamat* and vv. 27–28, where he says to Arjuna: (27) *mayā samudyatān pāśān vāruṇān anivāraṇān, pratigṛhṇīṣva Kaunteya sarahasyanivartanān* (28) *ebhis tadā mayā vīra saṁgrāme tārakāmaye, Daiteyānāṁ sahasrāṇi saṁyatāni mahātmanām.*

'abode of the Pātāla-Agni (= *āsuro 'gnih*, n. 326) and prison of the Asuras' *(pātālajvalanāvāsam asurāṇāṁ ca bandhanam)*. Here again there are some significant variant readings, which suggest the idea that the notion of captive Asuras was not generally accepted [352].

The only conclusion that can be drawn from these data is that also in the epic Varuṇa, far from being "un simple dieu des eaux" (p. 75), was still essentially the same ambiguous and ominous god as in the Veda. Although the epic is less reticent than the older texts, the traditional taboo is still prevalent. Judging by the indirect indications one is bound to conclude that as a rule it prevented also the epic bards from openly referring to the god's dark side. What is said about him explicitly only relates to his opposite favourable aspect. Typologically the epic Varuṇa belongs to the category of such two-sided figures as Viśvarūpa, who publicly was the purohita of the gods but secretly of the Asuras, or Vidura [353].

Hopkins incidentally touches upon the general problem with which Varuṇa's relation to the demons confronts us but his explanation does not go to the root of the matter. He writes: "Ordinarily the Devas exclude the demons; they are as light to darkness, but (as shown below) all spiritual beings are sons of the Father-god and so all are divine. It is rather the nature of the individual which determines whether he is "god" or "demon", than the class to which he is assigned" [354]. In Varuṇa the divine and the demoniacal are linked in a suprarational unity, which eludes every attempt at a logical formulation [355]. In contradistinction to Hopkins' opinion this is not merely an isolated feature of the god alone but a structural trait that can also be found in other mythological figures. One of these will be studied more in detail in the next section.

16. AMBIGUOUS FIGURES: UŚANĀ KĀVYA AND VIŚVARŪPA

A classical instance of the same ambiguity that has been pointed out in Varuṇa is Uśanā Kāvya. (See also Dumézil, Mythe et épopée II, pp. 133–228). The latter stemmed from the Proto-Indo-Iranian mythology but in the Sanskrit epic (where he also bears the name Śukra) he had become the father-in-law of Varuṇa, who married his daughter Devī [356]. Of old he bears the title *kavi* and in the epic he is the *guru* of gods and Asuras [357]. Of his relation to both parties that to the Asuras is the more

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[352] For *asurāṇāṁ ca bandhanam* some manuscripts read *asurāṇāṁ niveśanam* "dwelling-place of the Asuras," *asurāṇāṁ tathā 'layam* "and also the abode of the Asuras," and *asurāṇāṁ ca bāndhavam* "and cognate of the Asuras."

[353] For Viśvarūpa see also p. 101.

[354] Epic Mythology, p. 3 n. 1.

[355] Cf. Renou, EVP. 7, p. 4: "autour duquel on aurait voulu laisser planer une sorte d'ambiguité fondamentale." The words "on aurait voulu" reflect a different view of the relation of Vedic man to his myth from the one here taken.

[356] Mhbh. I.60.51 *Varuṇasya bhāryā jyeṣṭhā tu Śukrād Devī vyajāyata.*

[357] Mhbh. I.60.40 *Bhṛgoḥ putraḥ kavir vidvāñ Śukraḥ kavisuto grahaḥ . . . yogācāryo mahābuddhir Daityānām abhavad guruḥ, surāṇāṁ cāpi medhāvī brahmacārī yatavrataḥ.* Cf. Sørensen, Index, p. 312b.

significant one for he is said to be their teacher *(upādhyāya)* and priest *(purohita)*[358]. As such he is the adversary of Bṛhaspati, whom the gods have chosen as their priest. In the last-quoted passage Kavi Uśanā has a special power *(māyā)*, which is called the *vidyā saṁjīvanī* "science of revivification" and which at first ensures the superiority of the Asuras. Kavi Uśanā is the prototype of the *kavis*[359]. All this is rooted in ancient Vedic and pre-Vedic tradition[360], according to which Uśanā Kāvya was originally the *purohita* of the Asuras, just as Bṛhaspati was of the gods. How essential Uśanā's relation to the Asuras was is shown by the fact that sometimes he is represented as the messenger of the Asuras, in which function his divine counterpart is Agni[361]. His connection with the Asuras was, therefore, more essential than his priesthood, or the opposition between him and Bṛhaspati.

As far as these details are concerned the epic tale (Mhbh. I.71.5–6) corresponds with the older sources. In some of the latter, however, important additional details are found. According to one version (occurring in the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa and in Baudhāyana) there was a Gandharva, who stood above the two contending parties of the Devas and Asuras and who was the only one to know the issue of the endless war. On account of his position it is probable that this Gandharva was conceived as still

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[358] Mhbh. I.71.5f. *surāṇām asurāṇāṁ ca samajāyata vai mithaḥ, aiśvaryaṁ prati saṁgharṣas trailokye sacarācare* (6) *jigīṣayā tato devā vavrire 'ṅgirasaṁ munim, paurohityena yājyārthe Kāvyaṁ tū 'śanasaṁ pare, brāhmaṇau tāv ubhau nityam anyonyaspardhinau bhṛśam.* The Asuras are victorious until Uśanā goes over to the gods, cf. also Matsyapurāṇa 47.61 *tato 'surān parityajya Śukro devān agacchata.*

[359] Mhbh. VI.32.37 (=Bhagavadgītā X.37) *munīnām apy ahaṁ Vyāsaḥ, kavīnām Uśanā kaviḥ.* Cf. RS. IV.26.1 *kavír Uśánā.*

[360] See Geldner, Vedische Studien II (1897), p. 167ff., Caland, Über das rituelle Sūtra des Baudhāyana [Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes XII (1903)], p. 26, H. Oertel, JAOS. 28 (1907), pp. 81–88 (on Jaim. Br. I.125–127), J. Charpentier, Kleine Beiträge zur indoiranischen Mythologie [Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift 1911], p. 82, E. Sieg, Sonnenrennen im Rigveda [Nachr. Ges. Wiss. Göttingen, 1928], pp. 196–198, A. Hillebrandt, Vedische Mythologie II² (1929), p. 423, H. Lommel, "Kāvya Uçan", Mélanges Bally (1939), pp. 209–214.

[361] PB. VII.5.20 *Uśanā vai Kāvyo 'surāṇāṁ purohita āsīt;* JB. I.125 line 1 *Devāsurās saṁyattā jyoṅ na vyajayanta, Bṛhaspatir devānāṁ purohita āsīd, Uśanā Kāvyo 'surāṇām,* I.126 line 2 *sa* (viz. **triśīrṣā Gandharvo*) *hovāca: brāhmaṇāv imau samaṁ vidatur, Bṛhaspatir ayaṁ deveṣū, 'śanā Kāvyo 'sureṣu;* Baudh.ŚS. XVIII.46 (401,11) *Devāsurā ha yatra mahāsaṁgrāmaṁ saṁyetire, tad dhe 'māni bhūtāni dvedhai 'va vyapacakramur, devān evā 'nv anyāny, asurān evā 'nv anyāni. Bṛhaspatir devānāṁ purohita āsīd, Uśanā Kāvyo 'surāṇām;* Śāṅkh. ŚS. XIV.27.1 *Uśanā ha Kāvyo 'surāṇām purohita āsa* (commentary: *Śukraḥ kaveḥ putraḥ*, cf. Mhbh. I.60.40 *Śukraḥ kavisuto*). Lommel conjectured (Mélanges Bally, p. 211) that the epithet *Kāvya* has been inherited from Proto-Indo-Iranian and is identical with MIr. *Kā(ūs)*. For Uśanā and Agni as the messengers of the Asuras and the Devas respectively see TS. II.5.8.5 *Agnír devānāṁ dūtá āsīd, Uśánā Kāvyó 'surāṇāṁ, taú Prajāpatim praśnám aitām* (but in ŚB. III.5.1.21 Saháraksas is thus opposed to Agni). In Maitrī Up. VII.9 Bṛhaspati, disguised as Uśanā, gives the Asuras a wrong instruction: *Bṛhaspatir vai Śukro bhūtve 'ndrasya 'bhayāyā 'surebhyaḥ kṣayāye 'mām avidyām asṛjat.* Cf. van Buitenen, Maitr. Up., p. 88 "Bṛhaspati who has the (late) reputation of being a false teacher." This motif has been elaborated in, e.g., Matsya Pur. 47.183ff.

standing quite close to the primordial unity of the undifferentiated Chaos. A confirmation of this suggestion can be seen in the Rigvedic myth of Yama and Yamī, where the Gandharva as their ancestor occupies a similar position. The interesting detail then is that on the part of the undivided primordial world there is a knowledge of things to come (or, perhaps, of the deeper nature of all that is) that has gone lost in the two moieties of the dualistic Cosmos. The Gandharva knows that it will be impossible for any of the two parties to gain the victory, unless it can persuade the *purohita* of the other party to go over[362]. In other words what is found here is another instance of the *evocatio deorum*[363], already met with above where Indra exhorts Soma to come outside with the words *nirehi soma*[364]. In the same way Indra here, after having learnt by a ruse the 'truth' of the Gandharva, goes to Uśanā Kāvya and tries, in his quality of protagonist of the Devas, to induce him to go over[365].

The myth of Kavi Uśanā, accordingly, shows the same pattern that was seen in Varuṇa's going over to the Devas (RS. X.124.4). In the light of this conclusion, however, the current interpretation of the Rigvedic references to Uśánā Kāvyá cannot be accepted as correct[366]. When interpreted in the light of the later Vedic evidence, however, they appear to present difficulties which have escaped notice so far.

It must first be stressed that Kāvya Uśanā is here clearly a man, who refers to himself as a *mártya*. Cf. X.22.6 "As ye both [viz. Indra and Kutsa] arrive, Uśanā asks you: 'For what purpose (do ye enter) our house? Ye have come from afar, from the heaven and the earth, to a mortal man'" Indra seeks spaciousness for him (VI.20.11): "Thou, O Indra, wert the first of the helpers, as thou wert looking for a way out for Uśanā Kāvya". Cf. X.40.7: "Ye, O Aśvins, have aided Bhujyu, ye Vaśa, Śiñjāra and Uśanā"[367]. The persons here named were historical or legendary men:

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[362] JB. I.126 line 5 *tayor yataro yatarān upasameṣyati te jeṣyantī 'ti.*

[363] The phrase *evocatio deorum ex urbibus obsessis*, used by Macrobius (Saturnalia 3.9) has here been adopted as a succinct term for this mythological process. The corresponding Sanskrit term is *upamantraṇa*. Cf. Livy 1.55.5 and 5.21.5 *(deos) alios ex urbe sua evocatos.*

[364] RS. X.124.5. See above, pp. 17–20 and cf. X.60.7 *éhi nír ihi.*

[365] JB. I.126, lines 7–8 *sa ho 'śanasaṁ Kāvyam ājagāmā 'sureṣu. taṁ hovāca: ṛṣe, kaṁ imaṁ janaṁ* ("foreign people") *vardhayasy, asmākaṁ vai tvam asi, vayaṁ vā tavā, 'smān abhyupāvartasve 'ti*, Baudh. XVIII.46 (403,2) *sa ha gatvai 'vo 'śanasaṁ Kāvyam upamantrayāṁ cakre, Jayantyāś ca duhitrā catasṛbhiś ca kāmadughābhiḥ. sa hā 'jñapto* [!] *'surebhyo 'dhi upasamiyāya. tato ha vā etad devā asurān mahāsaṁgrāmaṁ jigyuḥ.* The situation as described in JB. has a close parallel in ŚB. I.6.3.13 (see n. 49). For *jana* "foreign people" see Minoru Hara, Pratidānam, p. 256ff. (with references), for *upamantrayati* see nn. 231, 418.

[366] See Bergaigne II, pp. 338–341, Macdonell, Vedic Mythology p. 147. The seventeen passages where Uśánā (Kāvyá) occurs are I.51.10, 11, 83.5, 121.12, 130.9, IV.16.2 26.1, V.29.9, 31.8, 34.2, VI.20.11, VIII.7.26, 23.17, IX.87.3, 97.7, X.22.6, 40.7.

[367] RS. X.22.6 *ádha gmánto 'śánā pṛchate vāṁ kádarthā na ā gṛhám, ā jagmathuḥ parākād diváś ca gmáś ca mártyam*, VI.20.11 *tváṁ vṛdhá indra pūrvyó bhūr varivasyánn Uśáne Kāvyāya*, X.40.7 *yuváṁ ha Bhujyúṁ yuvám Aśvinā Vāśaṁ yuváṁ Śiñjāram Uśánām úpārathuḥ.*

Bhujyu is elsewhere said to be the son of Tugra (I.117.15), and Vaśa was the *purohita* of king Pṛthuśravas (I.116.21, etc.). Only about *Śiñjāra* (whose name points to a non-Aryan background) further data are lacking.

As a human being, Uśanā was a sacrificer, who invigorated Indra with Soma before the god's fight against Śuṣṇa (I.51.10–11): "As Uśanā with force fashions thy force, (thy) violence thrusts asunder the two worlds with their greatness" (11) "Indra, when revelling at Uśanā's, mounts the (chariot with the) horses, which run ever faster. The vigorous one (mounts) the (chariot which) hastens along. He effused the water in streams. He broke open the firm strongholds of Śuṣṇa"[368]. The "force" *(sáhas)* which Uśanā here "fashions" for Indra is only a metaphor for the Soma. In the same way the Soma is called a *vájra* in I.121.12 "The intoxicating (beverage), which Kāvya Uśanā gives to thee, which he fashioned as a resistance-breaking *vájra* that belongs to new year's day (?)"[369] or indirectly denoted as such in V.34.2 "He, the liberal one, who filled his belly with Soma and revelled in the (beverage of the) sweet plant, when Uśanā, who has great weapons, gave him the thousand-pointed weapon to kill the animal"[370].

When Uśanā appoints Agni as his *hótṛ*[371], or is said to be supported by Indra and the Aśvins[372], this still agrees with the current picture of the Vedic sacrificer. Things become different when his quality of *kavi* is stressed. This was the most marked characteristic of Uśanā, who is the only Proto-Indo-Iranian *kavi* whose name has been handed down to us. Uśanā is introduced as saying "I am the *kavi* Uśanā, look at me"[373]. *Kavi* was the specific term to denote an initiate who, as a devotee of Varuṇa, had received his initiation and knowledge of the cosmic mysteries *(medhā)* in the nether world[374]. This character of the initiation explains how the mortal Uśanā could become the priest of the Asuras.

On the other hand, since Uśanā as the *kavi par excellence* must have stood in close relation to Varuṇa, the ancient Vedic tradition about his being the *purohita* of the Asuras may be considered to prove indirectly

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[368] RS. I.51.10 *tákṣad yát ta Uśánā sáhasā sáho ví ródasī majmánā bādhate śávaḥ* (11) *mándiṣṭa yád Uśáne Kāvyé sácāṁ Índro vaṅkú vaṅkutárā 'dhi tiṣṭhati, ugró yayíṁ nír apáḥ srótasā 'sṛjad ví Śúṣṇasya dṛṁhitā airayat púraḥ.*

[369] I.121.12 *yáṁ te Kāvyá Uśánā mandínaṁ dād vṛtraháṇam pāryaṁ tatakṣa vájram.* This translation is different from Geldner's. For *dād* see K. Hoffmann, Injunktiv p. 191 n. 157: "genereller Injunktiv oder prospektiver Konjunktiv"; for *pārya* see IIJ. 5, p. 181; for *vájra* see Bergaigne, II, p. 253, Oldenberg, Noten, and Hillebrandt, Ved. Mythologie I², p. 336 n. 2.

[370] RS. V.34.2 *ā́ yáḥ sómena jaṭháram ápipratā́ 'mandata maghávā mádhvo ándhasaḥ, yád īm mṛgáya hántave mahávadhaḥ sahásrabhṛṣṭim Uśánā vadháṁ yámat.* The soma acted for Indra as a *vájra*. This explains the use of the adj., four times an epithet of the *vájra*, as an epithet of Soma (twice). Cf. IIJ. 12, p. 283.

[371] RS. VIII.23.17 *Uśánā Kāvyás tvā ní hótāram asādayat, āyajíṁ tvā Mánave jātávedasam.*

[372] RS. VI.20.11 *tváṁ vṛdhá Indra pūrvyó bhūr varivasyánn Uśáne Kāvyāya*, X.40.7 *yuvā́ṁ ha Bhujyúṁ yuvám Aśvinā Vāśaṁ yuvā́ṁ Śiñjāram Uśánām úpārathuḥ.*

[373] RS. IV.26.1 *ahám kavír Uśánā pāśyatā mā.*

[374] Cf. IIJ. 4, p. 187, 8, pp. 110, 127, and especially VIII.6.10 *medhā́m ṛtásya.*

that also in Vedic belief the *devá ásura* Varuṇa had a secret connection with the *ásurā adevāḥ*. It has been suggested above[375] that at the end of the year Varuṇa was, again, temporarily one of them. As for Uśanā, it is characteristic of him that he himself is never called an Asura. The way in which Baudhāyana accounts for his curious position in terms of the cosmic dualism is instructive: "When the Devas and Asuras were contending in the great war *(mahāsaṁgrāma)*, then all these beings departed into two directions: some of them joined the Devas, others the Asuras. Bṛhaspati was the *purohita* of the Devas, Uśanā Kāvya of the Asuras"[376].

That Uśanā, as a *kavi*, actually had a knowledge of the cosmic mysteries can indirectly be inferred from what is said of Soma in IX.87.3: "The inspired Ṛṣi, the leader of men, who is a skilful Ṛbhu and, owing to his prophetic inspiration, is Uśanā, found what was concealed of them [the cows], the hidden secret name of the cows"[377]. Since Soma is also a *kavi*[378], it was natural for him to be likened to Uśanā. The same knowledge of cosmic secrets, however, is also attributed to Varuṇa himself as the divine *kavi*[379], who is asked to reveal it to the poet[380]. This is the well-known pattern of the initiation of the poet-seer by Varuṇa[381]. Soma could be likened to Uśanā owing to his *kāvya* because the ancient Aryan **kavi Uśan(ā)*, being a mortal, had become *the* prototype of the Aryan seer in general. In a similar way Soma is likened to him in IX.97.7 "Openly professing his *kavi*-ship like Uśanā the god names the births of the gods"[382], which may be paralleled with IV.16.2 "The *(hótṛ)* must recite a hymn of praise, a poem, he who is a *vedhás* like Uśanā, to thee, O Asuric one, who hast the insight"[383].

On account of his being a *kavi*, Uśanā is also mentioned jointly with Atharvan and performs acts which have almost a cosmogonical character. Cf. I.83.5 "Atharvan was the first to clear the paths by means of sacrifices;

[375] See above, p. 42.

[376] See n. 361.

[377] RS. IX.87.3 *ṛṣir víprah puraetā jánānām Ṛbhúr dhíra Uśánā kā́vyena, sá cid viveda níhitaṁ yád āsām apīcyàṁ gúhyaṁ nā́ma gónām.* Lüders, p. 521f., has convincingly demonstrated that this secret name is Uṣas. Cf. Renou, EVP. 9, p. 100.

[378] Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. I², p. 370ff.

[379] RS. VIII. 41.5 *yó dhartā́ bhúvanānāṁ yá usrā́ṇām apīcyò véda nā́māni gúhyā, sá kavíḥ kā́vyā purú rūpáṁ dyaúr iva puṣyati . . .* See Lüders, Varuṇa, p. 522.

[380] RS. VII.87.4 *uvā́ca me Váruṇo médhirāya tríḥ saptá nā́mā 'ghnyā bibharti, vidvā́n padásya gúhyā ná vocad . . .*

[381] Cf. IIJ. 8, p. 110ff. on RS. VII.88 (which is closely connected with the preceding hymn).

[382] RS. IX.97.7 *prá kā́vyam Uśáneva bruvāṇó devó devā́nāṁ jánimā vivakti.* Ludwig II, p. 503 and Geldner translate *jánimā* as "Geschlechter", Renou, EVP. 9, p. 46 renders "naissances".

[383] RS. IV.16.2 *saṁsā́ty ukthám Uśáneva vedhā́ś cikitúṣe asuryā̀ya mánma.* The meaning of *vedhás* ("Meister" according to Geldner, "Meister in der Kultdichtung" Lüders, p. 554) must have been close to that of *kavi*. See Renou, EVP. 16, p. 148 (also 4, p. 68, 7, p. 10 and 9, p. 91: "ce mot indéterminable"). Although *cit-* seems to have been an Indo-Iranian word for "vision", its exact shade of meaning cannot be determined.

from these Sūrya, the seer, the guardian of vows, was born. At the same time *(?sácā)* Uśanā Kāvya drove the cows thither . . ." [384].

It is quite in keeping with Uśanā's function as *purohita* of the Asuras that the Rigvedic poets represent him as living "far away" or "coming from afar". This must have been a traditional notion since twice a pāda begins with the words *Uśánā yát parāvátaḥ*, cf. I.130.9 (to Indra) "Since thou, O kavi, hast come from afar, together with Uśanā, for aid", V.31.8 (to Indra and Kutsa) "When the gods brought you into contact with Uśanā" and VIII.7.26 (to the Maruts) "When ye come from afar, with Uśanā, to Ukṣṇo Randhra" [385]. On the other hand Indra and Kutsa are said to come from afar, from heaven and from the earth, to the mortal Uśanā [386]. The term "afar" *(parāvát)* is specifically used to denote the nether world and it is readily understood that Uśanā, living with the Asuras, had to come "from afar" [387]. When, therefore, it is said in X.22.6 that Indra (from heaven) and Kutsa (from the earth) had to come "from afar" *(parākád)* to meet the mortal Uśanā, this may be interpreted as implying that Uśanā was "far away", in the dwelling-place of the Asuras. In this connection it is particularly interesting that Uśanā asks them "For what purpose have ye come to our house?" [388] As far as I can see the word "our" has been disregarded by all translators. It can only be fully understood, when it is realized that Indra and Kutsa, in order to meet Uśanā, had to go all the way from heaven and the earth to the nether world and the Asuras.

According to Geldner [389] Indra and Kutsa came to ask Uśanā's *advice*. This opinion, which is characteristically based upon Uśanā's fame in the classical period as the author of a *nītiśāstra*, is hardly correct. Indra needed material support, not advice: the next stanza (X.22.7) refers to an incantation *(bráhmó 'dyatam)* for the benefit of Indra [390]. What the poet actually had in mind may be inferred from V.29.9 (to Indra and Kutsa): "When ye, O Indra, together with Uśanā, came to the house, with the powerful swift horses, thou camest here victorious, on the same chariot (with Kutsa); with (the help of) Kutsa and the Devas thou hadst

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[384] RS. I.83.5 *yajñaír átharvā prathamáḥ pathás tate tátaḥ sûryo vratapā́ vená ājani, á gā́ ājad Uśánā Kāvyáḥ sácā . . .*

[385] RS. I.130.9 *Uśánā yát parāvátó 'jagann ūtáye kave* (cf. Hoffmann, Injunktiv, p. 191 n. 155), V.31.8 *sáṁ ha yád vām Uśánā 'ranta devā́ḥ*, VIII.7.26 *Uśánā yát parāváta Ukṣṇó rándhram áyātana (dyaúr ná cakradad bhiyā́)*. An accusative *Uśánā* (for *Uśánām* X.40.7), as assumed by Geldner ad I.130.9, V.29.9 and VIII.7.26, is impossible.

[386] See n. 367.

[387] It is certainly due to an assimilation of the well-known type that in I.130.9 Indra, addressed as *kaví*, is said to have come with Uśanā "from afar". On Indra's *kavi*-ship see H.-P. Schmidt, Bṛhaspati und Indra, pp. 151, 157f. and cf. IIJ. 13, p. 284. The same must be true of the Maruts in VIII.7.26.

[388] X.22.6 *kádarthā na á gṛhám, á jagmathuḥ . . .*

[389] Note ad X.22.4 and Vedische Studien II, p. 168 (for Uśanā's *mantras*), p. 169 (for his *nīti* !).

[390] See J. Narten, Die sigmatischen Aoriste im Veda, p. 175.

overcome [or "then overcamest"?] Śuṣṇa"[391]. Whatever house may be meant here, Śuṣṇa's (before the fight) or Kutsa's (at the triumphal return after the fight, as is Sāyaṇa's interpretation), or perhaps even the poet's[392], this much follows from the translation here given that Uśanā's *presence* was necessary for Indra to overcome the demon Śuṣṇa. Therefore, Uśanā's surprise at the unexpected arrival of Indra and Kutsa at the *gṛhá* of the Asuras ("*our* house"!) is quite understandable. Only a very serious purpose could have induced them to come to see him *there*, and this purpose can only have been the *evocatio* mentioned in later Vedic texts. The need for Uśanā's presence is clearly explained in the hymns: he is not yet (as Geldner thought) the wise counsellor, the author of a *nītiśāstra* which he was to become in the classical period, but the one who gave Indra the soma that became his *vájra*[393]. The "magical" strengthening by Uśanā was indispensable and the formulaic phrase "to come with Uśanā" expressed the certainty that the god would now be victorious. Since the Soma had to be won from the powers of the nether world (as the *śyena*-myth expresses in a mythical way, and the ritual of the *somakrāyaṇa* in a symbolical one) it is natural that Uśanā could act as a mediator between the two worlds. It is possible that according to one version of the myth Indra drank the Soma in Uśanā's house, that is, in the nether world[394]. Anyway, Uśanā had to side with Indra in order to enable the latter to fight Śuṣṇa and this involved the necessity of Uśanā's going over. The idea of the *evocatio*, as found in the brāhmaṇas, was also known to the Vedic poets (RS. X.124.6).

Leaving aside RS. I.130.9[395] we may now turn to the epic, where Uśanā's "magical" power is described in greater detail as a *vidyā*

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[391] Geldner's principle that everywhere in the formulaic *pāda*-opening *Uśánā yát* there must be the same grammatical form and syntactic structure (Vedische Studien II [1897], p. 169) was quite sound, although the possibility of reinterpretation by later poets (in the sense of Manu Leumann's Homerische Wörter) or mere variation in the use of a traditional formula cannot be ruled out. He rightly, therefore, took Uśánā as an instrumental. Later, however, he changed his mind, taking it as a genitive in his Glossar (1907), and, apparently, as an accusative in his *Übersetzung* II, p. 26 (in spite of the reference to his *Glossar*). But his translation "Als ihr beide . . . zu Uśanas ins Haus kamt . . ." is grammatically impossible and presupposes a situation which it is difficult to explain. Ludwig II (1876), p. 109, rendered *Uśánā* as a vocative, which is impossible on account of the accent. This may have been the reason why in 1883 (vol. V, p. 95) he suggested that *Uśánā* here meant the *vajra* which Uśanā had given to Indra. Oldenberg took *Uśánā* as a nominative.

[392] Geldner, in a note on his translation of X.22.7–10, and Hoffmann, Injunktiv, p. 191, rightly point out that Indra's fight with the *mṛgá Śúṣṇa* is a mythical exploit, which is represented as being repeated in the world of the poets. It is, therefore, of lasting importance.

[393] See nn. 368–370.

[394] Cf. I.51.11, quoted above, p. 96.

[395] RS. I.130.9 *prapitvé vácam aruṇó muṣāyatī 'śānā́ ā́ muṣāyati, Uśánā yát parāvátó 'jagann ūtáye kave*. See Bergaigne II, p. 339 (Uśanā or Indra stole *vāc*?), Oldenberg, Noten I, p. 135, Hoffmann, Injunktiv, p. 191 ("ganz unklar"), etc.

saṁjīvanī (Mhbh. I.71.9). Herman Lommel[396] has pointed out that this is a feature of Uśanā which can be traced back to the common Aryan mythology. In the Iranian tradition the well-known hero king Kay Kāūs[397] subdues the country of demons "und Kay Kāūs ist dadurch auch Gebieter über die Daemonen geworden. Diese errichten für ihn wunderbare Zauberschlösser im Elburzgebirge, wo ewiger Frühling und ewige Jugend herrscht, und gealterte Menschen verjüngt werden" (p. 212)[398]. Since contact with demons and magic power (access to the source-wells of life) must of old have been characteristic of the Aryan *kavi*, the fight of Kay Kāūs in Middle Iranian sources is obviously a secondary aetiological myth and the Indian epic has here, as in other cases, preserved old features of the myth. In this connection it is hardly accidental that in the Kaṭha Upaniṣad I.1 Uśan(t)'s son Naciketas goes to Yama and the realm of the dead.

In the epic Uśanā has unquestionably an "underworldly" character: when Rudra is performing a *dīkṣā* before his fight against Tripura, Uśanā cuts off some locks of hair. These then become serpents which wind about Rudra and thus make him Nīlakaṇṭha[399]. Just as in older texts, he is in the epic the *purohita* of the Asuras and, as such, the antagonist of Bṛhaspati[400]. He possesses a knowledge which sometimes surpasses Bṛhaspati's[401]. He is known as a *nītiśāstrakartṛ*[402], his work having been revealed at the Auśanasa tīrtha[403], and is especially quoted as a military epigrammist[404], his instructions having the same value as those of Bṛhaspati[405].

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[396] See n. 360.

[397] According to Lommel's guess from Proto-Indo-Iranian **kavi Kāvya Uśan*. See n. 361.

[398] See A. Christensen, Les Kayanides, p. 73ff.

[399] See Hopkins, Epic Mythology, pp. 180, 226, and cf. Mhbh. XII.329.15 (:342.26 Bomb. ed.) *tripuravadhārthaṁ dīkṣām abhyupagatasya Rudrasyo 'śanasā śiraso jaṭā utkṛtya prayuktāḥ. tataḥ prādurbhūtā bhujagāḥ. tair asya bhujagaiḥ pīḍyamānaḥ kaṇṭho nīlatām upanītaḥ. pūrve ca manvantare svāyaṁbhuve nārāyaṇahastabandhagrahaṇān nīlakaṇṭhatvam eva vā.*

[400] Mhbh. XV.35.13 *Bṛhaspatir vā deveṣu Śukro vā 'py Asureṣu yaḥ* . . . and Bhāg. Pur. VIII.10.33, where Bṛhaspati, in the battle of the *Amṛtamanthana*, is fighting with Uśanā.

[401] Cf. Matsyapurāṇa 47.81 *mantrān icchāmy ahaṁ deva ye na santi Bṛhaspatau.*

[402] Thus Nīlakaṇṭha in his commentary on V.39.30 Bomb. ed. Cf. Pañcatantra I śl. 185 (BBS, ed. Kielhorn) *Uśanā veda yac chāstraṁ yac ca veda Bṛhaspatiḥ, strībuddhyā na viśiṣyete tasmād rakṣyāḥ kathaṁ hi tāḥ* (: Mhbh. XIII.39.7. *tāḥ sma rakṣyāḥ kathaṁ naraiḥ*), Hitop. I śl. 114 (edd. von Schlegel and Lassen), I śl. 122 (ed. Nirṇaya Sāgara Press, Bombay 1947), not in the ed. Peterson (p. 27).

[403] Mhbh. IX.38.6 *tatra pūrvaṁ tapas taptaṁ Kāvyena sumahātmanā, yatrā 'sya nītir akhilā prādurbhūtā mahātmanaḥ.*

[404] Mhbh. XII.136.127 *buddhyā tvam Uśanāḥ sākṣād bale tv adhikṛtā vayam, tvanmantrabalayukto hi vindeta jayam eva ha*, XII.56.28 *ślokau co 'śanasā gītau purā tāta maharṣiṇā, tau nibodha*, XV.12.15 *Uśanā veda yac chāstraṁ tatrai 'tad vihitaṁ vibho*, IX.57.12 *api co 'śanasā gītaḥ śrūyate 'yaṁ purātanaḥ, ślokas tattvārthasahitas tan* [v.l. *taṁ*) *me nigadataḥ śṛṇu* (13) *punar āvartamānānāṁ bhagnānāṁ jīvitaiṣiṇām, bhetavyam ariṣeṣāṇām ekāyanagatā hi te.*

[405] Mhbh. IX.61.48 Bomb. ed. (fragment 367* after IX.60.46 crit. ed.) *Bṛhaspater Uśanaso nopadeśaḥ śrutas tvayā.*

Still more ambiguous is Viśvarūpa, son of Tvaṣṭṛ. Geldner has been the first to point to "die eigentümliche Zwitterstellung des Tvaṣṭṛ im ganzen RV." [406]. Since his *patnī* (or *sapatnī*) was an Asurī, the TS. II.5.1.1 says (in the translation by Keith) "Viśvarūpa, son of Tvaṣṭṛ, was the domestic priest of the gods and the sister's son of the Asuras. He had three heads, one which drank Soma, one Surā, and one which ate food. He promised openly the share to the gods, secretly to the Asuras. Men promise openly the share to every one; if they promise any one secretly, his share is indeed promised. Therefore Indra was afraid (thinking), 'Such an one is diverting the sovereignty (from me)'. He took his bolt and smote off his heads" [407]. The Mahābhārata, which relates the story in detail as an *itihāsa purātana* in V.9.3–36, gives the version of the *Taitt. Saṁhitā* (II.5.1.1) in XII.329.17–19 [408], where the ambiguous behaviour of Viśvarūpa is particularly stressed. In this light the role of Vidura in the epic may also prove interesting.

17. THE EVOCATIO (UPAMANTRAṆA)

From the myths mentioned before there emerges a general picture, which was briefly referred to on p. 20 but which it is now possible and necessary to analyze in greater detail. The basic idea is that in the primordial fight between Devas and Asuras, which is periodically repeated, there is a balance of power so that neither of the two parties can gain the victory. For this to become possible there must be a shift in the *status quo*, which can be brought about in various ways:

A. Intervention of a god of the totality in favour of one of the parties. Since these gods by their very nature transcend the dualism of the

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[406] See Vedische Studien II (1898), p. 168.

[407] TS. II.5.1.1 *Viśvárūpo vaí tvāṣṭráḥ puróhito devánām āsīt, svasríyó 'surāṇāṁ. tásya tríṇi śīrṣáṇy āsant, somapánaṁ surāpánam annádanaṁ. sá pratyákṣaṁ devébhyo bhāgám avadat, paróksam ásurebhyaḥ. sárvasmai vaí pratyákṣam bhāgáṁ vadanti, yásmā evá paróksaṁ vádanti, tásya bhāgá uditás. tásmād Índro 'bibhed: īdṛ́ṅ vaí rāṣṭráṁ ví paryāvartayatī 'ti. tásya vájram ādā́ya śīrṣáṇy achinad* . . . Cf. MS. II.4.1 (38,1) *Viśvárūpo vaí tvāṣṭrá āsīt triśīrṣā́ 'surāṇāṁ svasríyaḥ. sá sómam ékena śīrṣṇā́ 'pibat, súrām ékenā́, 'nnam ékenā 'vayat. sá Índro 'manyatā́: 'yáṁ vā́vé 'dáṁ bhaviṣyatī 'ti. téna sámalabhata. téna yugaśáram apatat. sá tákṣāṇaṁ tiṣṭhantam abravīd: ā́dhāve, 'mā́ny asya śīrṣáṇi chinddhí 'ti. tásya tákṣo 'paskádya paraśúnā śīrṣáṇy achinat. tásmāt tákṣṇe śíro dhṛtám*, KS. XII.10 (172,5) *Viśvarūpo vai triśīrṣā 'sīt, tvaṣṭuḥ putro 'surāṇāṁ svasrīyas. sa somam ekena śīrṣṇā 'pibad, annam ekenā 'vayat, surām ekenā 'pibat. sa Indro 'manyatā: 'yaṁ vāve 'daṁ bhaviṣyatī 'ti. tena samalabhata. tena yugaśaram apadyata. sa takṣāṇaṁ tiṣṭhantam abravīd: ādhāvā, 'sye 'māni śīrṣāṇi cchinddhī 'ti. tasya takṣo 'pādrutya paraśunā śīrṣāṇy acchinat. tasmāt takṣṇaś śiro dhṛtam* (viz. at the sacrifice, cf. Mhbh. V.9.33 *śiraḥ paśos te dāsyanti bhāgaṁ yajñeṣu mānavāḥ*). After Viśvarūpa's death Tvaṣṭṛ creates Indraśatru and Prajāpati dips Indra's *vájra*, see n. 113.

[408] In the epic the story is found in Mhbh. V.9.39ff. (esp. 42), VII.69.54, V.16.20 and 28 and (in a prose passage) XII.329.17, which literally quotes part of TS. II.5.1.1 (see Hopkins, Epic Mythology, p. 130f.). The Taittirīya version is not, however the original one. Cf. MS. II.4.3 (40,14), where it is Tvaṣṭṛ himself who dips the bolt, just as he fashions it in the Rigveda (V.31.4, etc.).

contending parties any step taken by them turns out to be decisive. It may be true that in the phenomenal world every victory is only temporary[409], but the myth describes the ideal structure of this process. According to the pattern of the myth the god may stand either *between* the two parties, or above them. In the former case it can be said that the god participates in either party, the clearest instance of which is Viṣṇu. Regardless of whether the belief of later Hinduism about his being eight months in the upper world, while sleeping[410] four months in the nether world, is in this form old or rather a later elaboration, it is in any case the clearest expression of Viṣṇu's nature. In this context it is evident that his taking three steps *before* Indra strikes at Vṛtra is deeply rooted in the constitution of the Universe as the Vedic Indians saw it[411].

A god of totality who stands *above* the parties is Prajāpati. He is best characterized as the god in whom the two moieties participate. His character of an impartial high god has been discussed above. Only rarely is he said to give direct support to the Devas[412]. More often this is done in a subtle, indirect way[413]. A clear illustration of the different positions of Viṣṇu and Prajāpati will be seen below in the epic account of the Churning of the Ocean.

B. An entity is surreptitiously stolen from one party and taken to the other. This is found in the myth of Mātariśvan's stealing Agni from the Asuras for the gods[414], and in that of the eagle (*śyená*) who brings Soma to Indra. It is obvious that these two agents must originally have had a mythological status outside the two parties, otherwise they would not have been able to perform their acts. In the myths, however, no attempt is made to define their status more exactly.

C. One or more entities go over of their own free will:

1) as the result of their own decision, e.g., in the case of Agni who leaves the father Asura and prefers Indra (X.124.4) or in the epic Śrī, who during the Churning of the Ocean, leaves the primordial world and sides with the gods[415], or, having lived with the Asuras, prefers to live with Indra[416]. Another instance is Vibhīṣaṇa in the Rāma-saga, who goes over from his brother Rāvaṇa to Rāma and is welcomed by the latter as the one who by his mere arrival guarantees Rāma's victory (p. 78).

2) as the result of a contest, the (mostly female) entity standing between the two parties. Although this could be considered a variant of 1),

[409] See p. 34.

[410] For the mythical meaning of sleep see p. 31.

[411] Cf. Indological Studies – W. Norman Brown, p. 150 n. 88.

[412] See n. 113.

[413] For a characteristic instance from a later stage of Indian mythology, viz. Brahmā's position with respect to Devas and Asuras in the Nāṭyaśāstra, see above, p. 36 f.

[414] Cf. Etudes Asiatiques 25, p. 95ff.

[415] Mhbh. I.16.36 *Śrīḥ surā caiva Somaś ca turagaś ca manojavaḥ, yato devās tato jagmur ādityapatham āśritāḥ.*

[416] See p. 20.

the two additional elements of the contest and the intermediate position are so characteristic that it can better be considered a separate way of deciding the strife.

Some instances will be discussed below.

3) as the result of an *evocatio* [417].

While C 1–3 are different ways of looking at the same myth rather than different myths, B constituted a separate myth. The four possible variations can be illustrated by Soma being stolen by the *śyená* (*passim* in the Rigveda), Soma going over to the Devas (X.124.4c), his *evocatio* by Indra (X.124.6c *nirêhi Soma*), and the contest in I.108.6 *ayáṁ Sómo ásurair no vihávyaḥ* "We have to compete with the Asuras in calling Soma towards either side".

It has been seen above that the typical term for the 'evocatio' is *upamantrayati*, which does not mean "bestechen" [418] but simply "to call towards oneself" [419]. If an entity is the stake of a contest, the Rigveda uses *ví hvayete*, *ví hvayante*, irrespective of whether a mythical or a real strife is referred to [420]. Cf. *vihavá* "competitive invocation" (Wettruf, Wettanrufung I^1 X^2). In the Atharvaveda Agni is *vihávya* by the kings (II.6.4) and this is the technical name of AS. V.3 (cf. GB. II.2.34, perhaps also AS. VII.5.4, cf. V.3.11c). In the Yajurveda *upamantrayante* (MS. KS. TS. ŚB., also JB.) is the common term, *icchante* is only used in MS. [421], and *nirhṻya*, corresponding to RS. *nirêhi*, is a hapax in TS. II.5.2.4

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[417] See on this term n. 363.

[418] Thus Geldner, Vedische Studien II, p. 167. For the form *upa-mantrayati* see also n. 231.

[419] E.g., the gods try to persuade their *mahimānaḥ*, which have fled to the Asuras, to come back. Cf. KS. XXIX.1 (167,17), KKS. XLV.2 (268,13/314,19) *devāś ca vā asurāś ca saṁyattā āsaṁs. te devebhyo mahimāno 'pākrāmaṁs. te 'surān agacchaṁs. te 'surā devānāṁ bahūni śatāny aghnaṁs. tānī 'māni cchandāṁsi yāny ayajñavāhāni. te devā abibhayur: itthaṁ vāva nas sarvān asurā avapatsyantī 'ti. tāny upāmantrayanta. te 'bruvan: vāryaṁ vṛṇāmahā iti.* Or the gods ask the sacrifice (their heritage from Prajāpati's bequest) to entice Vāc away from their adversaries: ŚB. III.2.1.19 *té devá yajñám abruvan, yóṣā vá iyáṁ vāg, úpa mantrasyasva, hvayiṣyáte vai tvé 'ti*, etc. In AS. VI.73.1 ("for supremacy") *éhá yātu Váruṇaḥ Sómo Agnír Bṛ́haspátir Vásubhir éhá yātu, asyá śríyam upasáṁyāta sárva ugrásya cettúḥ sáṁmanasaḥ sajātāḥ* it is doubtful if a formal *evocatio* is meant. I know no passage where *á yātu* is used in the sense of *nir-á-etu*.

[420] Cf., e.g., RS. X.80.5 *agnim ukthair ṛṣayo vi hvayante*, IV.24.3, 39,5, X.42.4, 112.7 *ví hvayante (tám, Índram, tvā, tvâm)*, II.12.8 *yáṁ (Índraṁ) vihváyete*. Only I.102.6 does not refer to Indra.

[421] This may concern the *téjo yajñíyam* of the altar, or Gāyatrī, or Vāc. Cf. KS. XXV.6 (108, 17), KKS. XXXIX.3 (214,18/251,6) *devāś ca vā asurāś ca saṁyattā āsaṁs. tān yad asyās tejo yajñiyam āsīt, tat siṁhīrūpam iva mahiṣīrūpam iva bhūtvā 'ntarā 'tiṣṭhat. te 'vidur: yatarān vā iyam upāvartsyati ta idaṁ bhaviṣyantī 'ti. tāṁ devā upāmantrayanta. sā 'bravīd: vāryaṁ vṛṇai* and MS. III.8.5 (99,6) *yád vá asyā́ yajñíyaṁ médhyaṁ yát sádevaṁ, tád utkrámyā 'tiṣṭhad antarā́ devāsurấnt saṁyattā́nt siṁhī́rūpam iva bhūtvā́. tè 'vidur: yatarā́n vā́ iyáṁ upāvartsyáti tá idáṁ bhaviṣyantī́ 'ti. tásyāṁ vā́ ubháya aichanta.* In the following passages Gāyatrī stands between the parties: KS. X.7 (133,8) *devā́ś ca vā́ ásurāś ca sáṁyattā āsaṁs. tā́n gāyatry àntarā́ 'tiṣṭhad ójo vīryàṁ annā́dyaṁ parigṛ́hya. saṁvatsaró vā́vaināṁ sò 'ntarā́ 'tiṣṭhat . . .*

(see p. 18), since AS. *nirhvayāmi* (Śaun. 2, Paipp. 4) is only used in magic. Similarly *indram nirāhvayan* (JB. 3.169[5]), whereas (*indraṁ*) *nirhvayante* (GS 4) is only corrupt for *nihvayante* (AB., cf. Av. *nizbayemi*).

In a modern paraphrasis of these myths they seem ultimately to express the conviction that the Universe is based upon an asymmetric balance between life and death, the powers of life just turning the scale[422]. The same idea apparently underlies the symbolism of the numbers 101 and 99, of which the latter is the typically demoniacal number in the Rigveda[423]. The "divine" number 101 has remained in use in its derived form (101 + 7 =) 108[424].

18. VARUṆA AND THE Cchurning OF THE OCEAN

In conclusion of this study of Varuṇa's relation to the world of the shaped and the shapeless his position in the Amṛtamanthana will be considered more closely. It has been seen above that he does not personally take part in the cosmogonical fight[425]. The same appears to be still true

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tè 'vidur: yatarắn vấ iyám upāvartsyáti tá idáṁ bhaviṣyantī 'ti. tắṁ vyàhvayanta . . . sá devắn upấvartata. táto devấ ábhavan, párā 'surā abhavan; MS. II.1.11 (13, 8) *devấś ca vấ ásurāś cā 'spardhanta. tắn gāyatrī́ sárvam ánnaṁ parigṛ́hyā 'ntarā́ 'tiṣṭhat. tè 'vidur: yatarắn vấ iyám upāvartsyáti tá idáṁ bhaviṣyantī 'ti. tásyāṁ vấ ubháya aichanta;* ŚB. I.4.1.34 *devāś ca vấ ásurāś co 'bháye prājāpatyāḥ paspṛdhire. tắṁt spárdhamānān gāyatry àntarā́ tasthau. yā́ vaí sā́ gāyatry āsīd, iyáṁ vaí sā́ pṛthivī́, 'yáṁ haivá tád antarā́ tasthau. tá ubháya evá vidắṁ cakrur: yatarắn vaí na iyám upāvartsyáti, té bhaviṣyánti, páre 'tare bhaviṣyantī 'ti. tắm ubháya evò 'pamantrayắṁ cakrire.* However, in MS. III.7.3 (78,3) = KS. XXIV.1 (90,10), KKS. XXXVII.2 (195,20/228,4) *víhvayāmahā íti* is used. Similarly ŚB. III.2.4.4 *vy àhvayanta.* The last quotations refer to the contest between the gods and Gandharvas for supremacy. In a similar context *vyahvayetām* is used at PB. IX.2.22. Finally two quotations with Vāc standing between the parties: JB. II.115 line 3 *sā kruddhā . . . simhy ubhayatomukhī bhūtvo 'rdhvo 'dakrāmat. so 'bhayān devāsurān antarā 'tiṣṭhad. yaṁ devānām upāpmod, yam asurāṇāṁ, tam* [as is the reading of two manuscripts instead of *tad*] *ādadānā. tām upaiva devā amantrayanto* [see n. 231], *'pā 'surāḥ. sā devān abhyupāvartamānā 'bravīt: kiṁ me tataḥ syād, yad vo 'bhyupāvarteye 'ti;* ŚB. III.5.1.21 *tébhyo ha vák cukrodha, kéna mád eṣá śréyān bándhunā3 kénā3 yád etáṁ pratyágrahīṣṭa, ná mắm íti. sā́ haibhyó 'pacakrāma. sò 'bháyān ántareṇa devāsurā́nt sáṁyattānt simhī́ bhūtvā́ 'dádānā cacāra. tắm úpaivá devā́ amantrayantó, 'pā́ 'surā . . .* (22) *sā́ devắn upāvartsyánty uvāca: yád va upāvárteya kiṁ me tátaḥ syād íti.* Since the dvandva-compound *devāsurāḥ* is not, as a rule, used in the ŚB. (Delbrück, Altindische Syntax, p. 57) this passage may have been taken over from another brāhmaṇa. The specific terminology got out of use in the classical literature. Cf. Matsyapurāṇa 47.229 *yajñeno 'pāhvayāmas tau* (viz. *Śaṇḍāmarkau*) as against TS. VI.4.10.1 *té devāḥ Śáṇḍāmárkāv úpāmantrayanta.* [Add *ápa-śās-* MS.4].

[422] See M. Lietaert Peerbolte, Psychocybernetica (Amsterdam 1968), p. 101.

[423] Cf. the ninety-nine citadels of Śambara or the Dāsas, which is a mythological notion by which the reality of contemporary life could get a religious interpretation; and the ninety-nine Vṛtras (I.84.13f.). But the number 100 also occurs. Cf. Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 245, Macdonell, Ved. Myth., pp. 159, 161.

[424] On the number 108 see I. Scheftelowitz, "Die bedeutungsvolle Zahl 108 im Hinduismus und Buddhismus", Studia Indo-Iranica (Ehrengabe für Wilhelm Geiger), Leipzig 1931, pp. 83–88.

[425] See p. 54,

in the epic account of the Churning of the Ocean, which proves the relatively archaic character of the epic in contrast with the Purāṇas [426].

Whatever the origin of this creation myth may be, its archaic character cannot be questioned. Instead of Indra's fight with Vṛtra resulting in the latter's death and Indra's opening the primordial hill [427], we here find a cooperation, which is at the same time a competition and fight between the two groups of gods for the purpose of winning the life-elixir (and other goods) directly from the primeval water. The role of Mount Mandara is here limited to its functioning as the cosmic pivot, used as a churning-stick. The two parties need each other to achieve their purposes, which is symbolized by the technique of churning. This consists in pulling a cord to and fro on two sides, thus making the churning-stick rotate [428]. Held, who discusses the symbolism of the churning in detail, aptly remarks that this is the most concrete expression for the notion of the cosmic *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* [429].

An important and significant detail of the epic tale is that three gods do not take part in the competition.

Brahmā stands *above* the parties and, apart from making incidentally a request to Viṣṇu, he confines himself to giving his permission to start the contest.

Viṣṇu stands *between* the parties, in accordance with his fundamental characteristic that he belongs to the two moieties of this world. Since Gonda, Viṣṇuism and Śivaism p. 7, contests this, I may point not only to Viṣṇu's position, in Yajurvedic texts, in the middle of an arrow (ch. II, n. 275) and likewise of the jarjara (p. 151), but also to the emphasis which our texts lay upon his position in the Churning of the Ocean. In Mhbh. I.16.12–13 it is said that the Asuras took hold of the head of the world serpent, and the Devas of its tail – which may be connected with their character of older and younger brothers (Indol. Studies – W. Norman Brown, p. 145 n. 51) – "but where the god, Lord Ananta was [viz. wound as a rope around the churning stick, Bhāg. P. VIII.7.1], there was Nārāyaṇa". In this version Viṣṇu helps the gods, in this intermediate position, by shaking the head of his serpent, which then produces fire and smoke for the Asuras, but cooling rain for the gods (more explicitly at Viṣṇupurāṇa I.9.86–7). His ambiguous character becomes particularly apparent when the gods get tired and ask Brahmā for Viṣṇu's help, without which they are unable to complete their work. When Brahmā then asks Viṣṇu to give the gods strength, the latter pretends to be neutral (I.16.31) [430]: "Strength I give to all who

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[426] E.g., Matsyapurāṇa 249–251, Bhāgavatapurāṇa VIII.5.17; 8.15.

[427] Cf. History of Religions 10, p. 107ff.

[428] Mhbh. I.16.12 (Viṣṇupurāṇa 9.84, Bhāg. Pur. VIII.7.1) *netra* (cf. *navanīta* "fresh butter"); but Rām. I.44.17 and Mhbh. Kumbakoṇam ed.: *yoktra*.

[429] G. J. Held, The Mahābhārata, pp. 146, 143 and for cooperation *cum* competition, e.g., p. 171.

[430] Cf. I.16.31 *balaṁ dadāmi sarveṣām*.

have undertaken this work. Let all agitate the 'jar' ". (For *kalaśa* see India Maior, p. 149). Only later is he to help the gods by a trick, which was apparently an essential part of the myth (I.16.39 *māyām āsthito mohinīm*) [431]. In interpolated passages of the Rāmāyaṇa version the tortoise which carries Mount Mandara on its back, and which the Mahābhārata refers to as "Akūpāra, king of the tortoises" (I.16.10), becomes a form of Viṣṇu himself, while at the same time he also takes part in the churning "amidst the deities" (App. I.8d, 9, v.l. *mamantha devatānāṁ ca madhye*, v.l. 8.25 *devānāṁ madhyataḥ sthitvā*). Similarly Bhāg. P. VIII.7.8f. Most elaborate is the Viṣṇupurāṇa (3rd or 5th cent. A.D.): "In the middle of the Milk Ocean was Lord Hari himself in the shape of a tortoise, as a pivot for the mountain which turned round as the churning-stick. In one shape, bearing his discus and club, he pulled the king of serpents among the gods, in another among the Daityas. But above, he was, as Keśava, standing on the top of the mountain in still another, great shape of his, which was invisible to gods and Asuras" (I.9.88–90). Similarly Bhāg. P. VIII.7.11 (*āsureṇa rūpeṇa*) and 12. This version comes nearest to the bas-reliefs of Angkor Vat where, in a representation of the Churning of the Ocean, Viṣṇu is seen, standing in the middle between the contesting parties and joining hands with Devas as well as with Asuras. Beneath is the tortoise as another shape of the god and above the mountain he appears in his most heavenly shape, pressing down with both hands the mountain top. Cf. *nagāgraṁ pīḍayām āsa vāmahastena* and *parvatāgraṁ tu lokātmā hastenā 'kramya Keśavaḥ* in two interpolations after Rām. I.44.17 (App. I.8d.7 and 8.24). In all these versions, accordingly, Viṣṇu is the "connecting link" (Indol. Studies, p. 145). This position is so fundamental that it cannot possibly have been a later accretion: as early as the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa Viṣṇu is defined as "that which is between the two". It has been argued that in the Rigveda Viṣṇu could not fight the Asuras because they, too, were part of his essence. Gonda objects that even the Rigveda describes him as destroying demons (VII.99.4f.) and states that Viṣṇu goes to war (I.155.6). I am afraid, he here misses the point. In VII.99.4–5 Indra and Viṣṇu are *conjointly* addressed as having slain the *māyās* of the Dāsa and the men of the Asura Varcin, which does not prove that Viṣṇu was supposed to fight demons single-handedly (see n. 69!). What Viṣṇu's role was in their joint exploits is clearly enough described in the hymns: he takes part in the fight by his three strides, and in this sense he can also be said to "meet the challenge" (I.155.6 *práty ety āhavám*). Cf. MS. II.4.3, TS. II.4.12.3–5 (*viṣṇvanuṣṭhita!*). His character of connecting link between the parties would seem to stand unchallenged.

Varuṇa's part is also ambiguous, but for other reasons. He is not only the overlord or lord (*ádhipati*, *pati*) of the waters but in a way he is himself the water [432]. Before the emergence of the dual cosmos (the very

[431] On Viṣṇu as the divine trickster see Held, p. 299 and Hopkins, Epic Myth., p. 215.
[432] MS. IV.7.8 (104,9) *samudró vai Váruṇaḥ*, KS. XIII.2 (180,21) *āpo vai Varuṇaḥ*. See p. 77ff. and Hillebrandt, Vedische Mythologie II², p. 18.

process which is, in a way, described, in the myth of the Amṛtamanthana) the "waters" are the primordial world, which comprises, as a potentiality, all good and evil. This double-sidedness the myth expresses by the notion that not only the life-elixir *amṛta*, but also the deadly poison *kālakūṭa* [433] is produced from this water. It is true that according to the critical edition of the Mahābhārata the episode relating the emergence of this poison is a later interpolation, the aim of the churning being the creation of life. This does not necessarily mean that it is also a later addition to, or elaboration of the original myth. However that may be, the idea that by creating the ordered dualistic cosmos out of the undifferentiated primordial world not only life but also its opposite, death, came into existence was necessarily implied in this conception of creation itself. In the ocean (and in the *pitṛ́ ásura* who impersonated it) such opposites as day versus night, life versus death did not yet exist but creating the one necessarily involved creating the other [434]. Later Purāṇic versions of this myth took the idea of churning literally and evolved the notion of a Milk-ocean [435].

The churning, as the epic describes it, has the character of a violent attack on the ocean, that is, on Varuṇa's world: "As the ocean was churned by means of Mount Mandara by the gods and Asuras, it produced a terrible sound like the thunder of big rain-clouds. All kinds of aquatic animals, squeezed out by the big mountain, died by hundreds in the saltish water. Various creatures belonging to Varuṇa (and) living in Pātāla were killed by the big mountain. And while the mountain was turned round, big trees, rubbing against each other, fell down from the top of the hill with (all their) birds" [436]. This particular feature of "Varuṇic animals" is preserved even in the later Purāṇas [437].

In spite of its different presentation of the process this myth is characterized by the same aggressive attack on the primordial world as Indra's fight. Just as Indra slays Vṛtra, the churning results in the killing of hundreds of creatures. For the founding of the cosmos the cooperation of the Asuras is needed but as soon as the existence of the dual world is ensured, the defeated Mahāsuras disappear, in accordance with the ancient Vedic pattern [438], into the nether world and the sea [439], while

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[433] Mhbh. I.16, 274*, 3–7.

[434] See also Held, p. 145 and p. 306, where he rightly remarks that the Asuras were not entirely destitute of the *amṛta*.

[435] E.g., Matsyapurāṇa 249.14 *mathyatāṁ kṣīravāridhiḥ* as against Mhbh. I.15.2 *mathyatāṁ kalaśodadhiḥ*. See India Maior, p. 149 n. 3.

[436] Mhbh. I.16.18–21 = Matsyapurāṇa 249.69ff. *babhūvā 'tra mahāghoṣo mahāmegharavopamaḥ, udadher mathyamānasya Mandareṇa surāsuraiḥ* (19) *tatra nānājalacarā viniṣpiṣṭā mahādriṇā, vilayaṁ samupājagmuḥ śataśo lavaṇāmbhasi*, (20) *vāruṇāni ca bhūtāni vividhāni mahīdharaḥ, pātālatalavāsīni vilayaṁ samupānayat* (21) *tasmiṁś ca bhrāmyamāṇe 'drau saṁghṛṣyantaḥ parasparam, nyapatan patagopetāḥ parvatāgrān mahādrumāḥ*.

[437] Matsyapur. 249.25 *tathe 'ti Mandaraḥ prāha yady ādhāro bhaven mama, yatra sthitvā bhramiṣyāmi mathiṣye varuṇālayam*.

[438] See n. 24. Cf. Viṣṇupur. I.9.111 *pātālaṁ ca viveśa vai*.

[439] Mhbh. I.17.28 *tato mahīṁ lavaṇajalaṁ ca sāgaraṁ mahāsurāḥ pravivišur arditāḥ suraiḥ*.

other deities, such as Śrī and Soma, side with the gods (as they did in RS. X.124) [440].

Inconspicuous, but for that very reason most instructive, is Varuṇa's position in this contest. According to the older classical formula of Baudhāyana the 'great war' of the cosmogony was a process of polarization, in which all creatures sided with either of the two parties [441]. Varuṇa, however, impersonates the ocean itself and must, therefore, stand apart. He does not resist the Devas, nor can he prevent the churning from taking place. The most significant lines in this respect are I.16.7–9. They describe how at Viṣṇu's command the world-serpent Ananta (actually his own 'underworldly' aspect) lifts Mount Mandara, which is to serve as the churning-stick. Then the gods go with Mandara to the *ocean* and announce that they will churn *its* water in order to obtain the *amṛta*. The *lord of the waters* then stipulates that he shall also get a part of it. On that condition he is willing to endure the violent crushing by Mount Mandara [442].

It is characteristic that the text here does not make a clear distinction between the element and its god. The divine element is propitiated, like a victim before its immolation. Clearly, it cannot oppose the irresistible course of things. The myth seems to suggest the idea that the emergence of the ordered world was a cosmic necessity [443], to which even Varuṇa had to resign himself. On the other hand, the condition he makes also implies his going over to the gods.

When compared to the epic tale, which neatly distinguishes Varuṇa's position from that of the Devas, the authors of the Harivaṁśa and the Purāṇas seem to be no longer fully aware of the mythical background. This may, at least, be inferred from the fact that such an early Purāṇa as the Matsyapurāṇa, while preserving the idea that Mount Mandara [444] is to churn "Varuṇa's abode", at the same time says that the gods made Varuṇa their assistant [445]. Since, however, Varuṇa's aloofness is here still presupposed, it is not easy to interpret exactly the author's views. He may have been thinking of Varuṇa's belonging, in a later stage of the cosmogonical myth, to the Devas. In any case he was still aware of the fact that Varuṇa, true to his nature, did not take part in the fight [446]. Not before the late Bhāgavatapurāṇa [447] is Varuṇa represented as fighting

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[440] See n. 415.

[441] See n. 361.

[442] Mhbh. I.16.7–9 *atha parvatarājānaṁ tam ananto mahābalaḥ, ujjahāra balād brahman savanaṁ savanaukasam* (8) *tatas tena surāḥ sārdhaṁ samudram upatasthire, tam ūcur: amṛtārthāya nirmathiṣyāmahe jalam* (9) *apāṁ patir atho 'vāca: mamā 'py aṁśo bhavet tataḥ, soḍhāsmi vipulaṁ mardaṁ mandarabhramaṇād iti.*

[443] Cf. in this connection Lommel's remark about the necessity of Soma's being slain. See Paideuma III, 6–7 (June 1949), pp. 215–216.

[444] Matsyapurāṇa 249.25 (see n. 437).

[445] Matsyapurāṇa 249.14 *sahāyaṁ Varuṇaṁ kṛtvā.*

[446] See pp. 54, 104.

[447] For the tenth century A.D. as the date of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa see Jean Filliozat, Indological Studies – W. Norman Brown (1963), p. 74 (=Laghu-Prabandhāḥ 1974, p. 75).

as a mere *lokapāla* on the side of the gods[448]. However, the exact chronology of this change in the conceptions about Varuṇa's position would require a more detailed study than is possible here. The circumstance that in sculptural art Varuṇa is at a much earlier date represented as fighting among the Devas[449] shows that the evolution was not as simple as it might seem to be at first sight.

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[448] Bhāgavatapurāṇa VIII.10.26 *lokapālāḥ saha gaṇair Vāyv-Agni-Varuṇādayaḥ* (and 11.47 *Vāyv-Agni-Varuṇādayaḥ*), 10.28 *Varuṇo Hetinā 'yudhyan Mitro rājan Prahetinā*. For Varuṇa as a fighter cf. also Hariv. App. I.42B line 2143f.

[449] In the basreliefs of Badami, Cave II, dating from the sixth century (or, according to Agrawala, Matsya Purāṇa, opposite p. 311, from the seventh). See R. D. Banerjea, Basreliefs of Badami, Memoirs Archaeological Survey of India No. 25 (1928), p. 24 and Plate XI, e.

CHAPTER II

THE VIDŪṢAKA

1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

After all that has been written about the various theories on the origin of the Sanskrit drama[1] there is no need for a new critical survey. In recent times Renou and Thieme have briefly discussed the main theories[2]. The old idea of a Greek origin[3] and that of the Greek-Roman pantomime being the source of the (North-)Indian drama[4] have definitively been refuted.

The main theories which still hold the field are those which derive the drama from an Indian pantomime[5], which may have been connected with religious ballads or songs and dances[6], or with the recitation of the epic[7]. Although some scholars, in view of Patañjali's well-known comment

[1] For references see S. N. Dasgupta, A History of Sanskrit Literature, Classical Period, Vol. I (Calcutta, 1962), pp. 630–656 and see further, e.g., Sylvain Lévi, Le théâtre indien (Paris, 1890), pp. 343–366, Sten Konow, Das indische Drama (Berlin and Leipzig, 1920), pp. 40–42, Winternitz, Geschichte der indischen Litteratur III (1922), p. 174, A. B. Keith, The Sanskrit Drama (Oxford, 1924), p. 57ff., Paul Horsch, Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur (Bern, 1966), pp. 341–343, M. M. Ghosh, The Nāṭyaśāstra, Text, vol. I (Calcutta, 1967), Introduction, p. LI, n. 137, M. Chr. Byrski, Concept of Ancient Indian Theatre, New Delhi, 1974, G. H. Tarlekar, Studies in the Nāṭyaśāstra, Delhi-Patna-Varanasi, 1975, and many Indian publications which were not accessible to me, such as S. N. Shastri, Laws and Practices of Sanskrit Drama, vol. I, Benares, 1961.

[2] See Louis Renou, "La recherche sur le théâtre indien depuis 1890", Extrait de l'Annuaire 1963–1964, Ecole pratique des hautes Etudes, IVe section, sciences historiques et philologiques, pp. 27–40 [=Introduction, Le Théâtre indien par Sylvain Lévi, réimpression, 1963] and Paul Thieme, "Das indische Theater" in: Kindermann, Fernöstliches Theater, Stuttgart, 1966, pp. 26–51.

[3] A. Weber, Indische Studien II, p. 148, etc., Windisch, Der griechische Einfluss im indischen Drama (1882), Geschichte der Sanskrit Philologie, 2 vols (1917–1920), pp. 398ff.

[4] Hermann Reich, Der Mimus I (Berlin 1903). See Winternitz, p. 175, Keith, Sanskrit Drama, p. 67 n. 2, Dasgupta, p. 650ff.

[5] See Dasgupta, p. 642 and particularly Thieme, p. 29f.

[6] See, e.g., Winternitz, Geschichte der ind. Lit. III, p. 161 ("Balladendichtung"), p. 163 ("Tanz und Mimik"), p. 169 ("Einfluss des Volksstückes"), Macdonell, Skt. Literature (1900), p. 347: "From all this it seems likely that the Indian drama was developed in connection with the cult of Vishṇu-Kṛishṇa, and that the earliest acted representations were therefore, like the mysteries of the Christian Middle Ages, a kind of religious plays, in which scenes from the legend of the god were enacted mainly with the aid of song and dance, supplemented with prose dialogue improvised by the performers", M. M. Ghosh, Nāṭyaśāstra, Translation I² (1967), p. xlix [I¹, p. lv]: "it developed probably out of dances and songs in honour of a deity like Śiva who in later times came to be styled the great dancer-actor *(naṭarāja)*."

[7] H. Lüders, Philologica Indica, p. 428, Sten Konow, Aufsätze zur Kultur- und Sprachgeschichte (1916), p. 113f.: "als noch der Mimus das eigentliche Drama war ... In denjenigen Dramen Bhāsas, die von der zweiten Wurzel des indischen Dramas,

on Pāṇini III.1.26, have argued that these epic tales must have been Krishnaitic, it has rightly been pointed out that the classical drama as we know it, is predominantly based upon the story of Rāma[8]. Other theories that have found considerable support trace the origin of the drama back to puppet or shadow plays[9]. On the other hand, the idea that the Sanskrit drama has developed from Prakrit dramas[10] has long been abandoned. The not uncommon but fallacious idea that the simplest form is always necessarily the oldest has led some scholars to assume that the one-act *bhāṇa* (with a single actor !) is the prototype of the drama[11].

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dem halbdramatischen Vortrage epischer Stoffe, herstammen . . .", Das indische Drama (1920), p. 47: "Aus einer Verschmelzung des durch Schattenbilder illustrierten Vortrages epischer Sagen und der Kunst der alten Mimen ist somit das indische Drama entstanden", and Thieme, p. 33.

[8] See S. Lévi, p. 316, Renou, p. 39 with n. 2 (otherwise Thieme, p. 108; cf. also von Schroeder, Mysterium und Mimus im RV., p. 17ff. who points to the Śaiva cult). R. V. Jagirdar [Adya Rangacharya], Drama in Sanskrit Literature[2] (Bombay, 1967), p. 36ff., holds the *sūta* and the *kuśīlavas* to have been the first performers of the drama, the *sūta* having been the direct precursor of the *sūtradhāra*, with whom he is sometimes identified (Mhbh. I.47.15 crit. ed.). He compares BhNŚ. 2.27C *śuklaṁ sūtraṁ prasārayet*. G. T. Deshpande (in: Indian Drama, Delhi 1956, p. 16) accepts his theory. Cf. also Dasgupta, p. 647, on Cakkyars and *sūtas*.

[9] For the puppet play see Pischel, Die Heimat des Puppenspiels (Halle, 1900), Shankar P. Pandit, Vikramorvaśī, Notes p. 4f., Sylvain Lévi, p. 324f., Winternitz III, p. 178 n. 1, Konow, Das indische Drama, p. 46f., Keith, p. 52f., Dasgupta p. 641f. Thieme, p. 32 ("Ob es das Puppenspiel im alten Indien gegeben hat, muss dahinstehen: wirklich beweisende Spuren oder Hinweise aus alter Zeit haben sich nicht auftreiben lassen"). Pischel had drawn attention to Mhbh. (crit. ed.) III.31.22 *dārumayī yoṣā*, V.39.1 *anīśvaro 'yaṁ puruṣo bhavābhave sūtraprotā dārumayī 'va yoṣā, dhātrā tu diṣṭasya vaśe kilā 'yam*, which are not discussed by Thieme. H.-O. Feistel, Das Vorspiel auf dem Theater, Ein Beitrag zur Frühgeschichte des klassischen indischen Schauspiels (Dissertation Tübingen, 1969), p. 34, quotes an interesting passage from the Vākyapadīya 3, Kālasamuddeśa 4, where the puppet play is called a *yantra* and the puppet (in the commentary) *yantrapuruṣa*. In this passage the *sūtradhāra* is the performer of the puppet-show, although Thieme, p. 42 explains the term as having originally denoted the performer of a shadow-play, on the supposition that this technique was different from that of the modern shadow-play in South India (cf. F. Seltmann, BTLV. 127 [1971], pp. 452–489, 128 [1972], pp. 458–490) and of the Javanese wajang. S. K. Chatterji in: Indian Drama, Introduction, p. 6, takes the same view as Feistel, but *sūtradhāra* has also been explained as "measurer" (thus, e.g. Adya Rangacharya, Drama in Sanskrit Literature[2], p. 36) or as "*sūtra*-holder" (Renou, p. 33 n. 4: "tenant de [la doctrine énoncée en] *sūtra's* [les *naṭasūtra's* pāṇinéens]"?). Adya Rangacharya (l.c.) may be right in saying that "the puppet plays were merely the substitute of the populace for the dramatic luxury of the intellectuals". As for the shadow-plays see H. Lüders, SBAW. 1916, p. 698ff. [=Philologica Indica p. 391ff.], S. Konow, Das indische Drama, p. 45f., Thieme, pp. 30–34, 111–116, Renou, p. 33 n. 3 ("Rien là, en tout cas, ne nous conduit nécessairement aux origines du théâtre").

[10] See S. Lévi, pp. 329f., 335, A. Barth, Revue critique 1886, p. 265 [=Œuvres III, p. 474f.], J. Huizinga, De Vidûṣaka in het indisch tooneel (1897), p. 6, Renou, p. 36, on the possibility of "un type de littérature demeuré relativement "populaire", un peu comme l'ont été le *Pañcatantra* et ses dérivés en regard des contes savants."

[11] D. R. Mankad, The Types of Sanskrit Drama (Karachi, 1938), p. 136ff. Cf. G. T. Deshpande in: Indian Drama (Delhi 1956), p. 17.

Still important are the various attempts, from 1869 onwards, to find in Vedic literature and ritual the roots of the drama. Possible connections were found in the Rigvedic dialogue hymns [12], or in the *mahāvrata* ritual [13], in which a contest between an Ārya (Arya) and a Śūdra symbolically represented the fight for the sun between the Devas and Asuras (the Rigvedic *svàrṣāti*). In view of the ample discussion which in recent times Horsch has devoted to this problem [14] it is necessary to say a few words about his book, which gives a summary and synthesis of former research [15].

Horsch starts with the *ākhyāna* literature and first carefully investigates if traces of dramatic action can here be found. His conclusion is that they are entirely lacking in the recitation of tales [16]. In the *pāriplavam ākhyānam* of the horse sacrifice (p. 321) – which is not old according to Eggeling, SBE. 44, p. 361 n. 4 – he finds "germs" of epic narrative and rhapsodical poetry [17] but not of drama. His own picture of the historical development is as follows (p. 324): from the Vedic "ballads" must have developed "dance songs", which again must have been the prototype of the popular drama ("das volkstümliche Drama") [18]. He then points to the well-known prohibition of singing and dancing by the orthodox brahmans (p. 325, cf. pp. 231, 423) and rightly argues that since it was

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[12] Max Müller, Rig-Veda-Sanhita translated and explained, Vol. I Hymns to the Maruts (1869), p. 172f., repeated in the rewritten edition SBE. 32 (1891), p. 183, adopted and elaborated by S. Lévi, Le théâtre indien (1890), p. 301ff., L. von Schroeder, Mysterium und Mimus im Rigveda (1908), *passim*, J. Hertel, "Der Ursprung des indischen Dramas", WZKM. 18 (1904), pp. 59–83, "Der Suparṇādhyāya, ein vedisches Mysterium", *ibidem* 23 (1909), p. 273ff., 24, p. 117ff., M. Winternitz, "Dialog, Ākhyāna und Drama in der indischen Literatur", WZKM. 23 (1909), p. 102ff. Cf. also Keith, p. 14ff., Konow, p. 39 and Horsch, Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur (1966), pp. 321, 329ff.

[13] A. Hillebrandt, "Über die Anfänge des indischen Dramas", Sb. kön. bay. Akad. Wiss. (München, 1914), 4. Abh., p. 22f., Konow, p. 42ff. (criticized by Keith, p. 25f., J. Gonda, Acta Orient. 19 (1943), p. 373f.).

[14] See Paul Horsch, Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur (Bern, 1966).

[15] Also Tsuji, IIJ. 12 (1969), pp. 27–34 mainly confines himself to giving a survey of its contents.

[16] See p. 321: "Die Rezitation ohne kultische Handlung hat bei Itihāsa-Motiven die magische Wirkung des Zauberrituals. Jede Anspielung auf Mimus, Tanz, Gesang und so weiter fehlt in diesem Falle".

[17] See p. 323 "Keime epischer Erzählkunst und der Rhapsodendichtung".

[18] See p. 324: "In Indien auf jeden Fall müsste der Tanz den melodischen Vortrag begleiten. Sicher ist die Annahme berechtigt, dass sich das volkstümliche Drama aus Tanzliedern entwickelt hat. Letztere wiederum haben ihre Hauptwurzeln in der altvedischen, religiösen Balladendichtung. Das Drama setzt deshalb mehrere Entwicklungsstufen voraus, die man nicht überspringen darf, indem man ein vollendetes Kultdrama in die Hymnenzeit projiziert ... Unsere Behauptung wird mehr Überzeugungskraft besitzen, wenn wir zeigen können, weshalb der Übergang von der Ballade und der von Lautengesang begleiteten epischen Gāthā zur eigentlichen theatralischen Schau innerhalb der konservativ-brahmanischen Kreise erst spät vollzogen wurde. Der Hauptgrund ist der Widerstand von seiten der orthodoxen Priesterschaft".

prohibited it must have existed [19]. In this connection the *mahāvrata* ritual can be considered the missing link, because it comprised singing and dancing [20]. From the fact that the words *nāṭaka* and *nāṭya* "drama" are of Prakrit origin, he further concludes that the oldest form of the drama must have been popular plays, which were performed on a primitive stage. That the subjects were taken from the mythic-religious tradition is in his opinion not essential [21].

The so-called "popular origin" of the Sanskrit drama, which also in Horsch's speculations plays such a prominent part, calls for some comment. In support of the assumption of these "volkstümliche Spiele" Hillebrandt, for instance, had referred to such features as the *vidūṣaka* (interpreted as the clown of the popular play) [22], which would require a more careful approach.

It is certainly true that the use of various Prakrits and the alternative use of prose and poetry in the Sanskrit drama have not yet been satisfactorily explained. However, does this use shed any light on the problem of the origin? Others have objected that "Le fait sanskrit, ici comme d'ailleurs, est d'abord un fait singulier" [23]. The circumstance that the actors were low-class people can to some extent account for the use of Prakrit terms, such as *nāṭya*, but does not give any clue to the origin. Particularly in this field the danger of unjustified generalizations is great. There are at least three points which speak against a "popular" origin and which will be discussed in detail: first, the performance of the

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[19] See p. 325: "Was verboten und bekämpft wurde, musste bekannt sein. Nur gehörte es andern Kreisen an, in diesem Falle also jenen volkstümlichen Schichten, deren Lebensführung dem konservativen Klerus ein Dorn im Auge war."

[20] See p. 326f.: "Das Mahāvrata ist ein religiöses Volksfest gewesen. Das *missing link* zwischen dem vedischen Kultdrama und dem authentischen indischen Schauspiel izt deshalb nicht im orthodoxen Brahmanentum, sondern im gemeinen Volke zu suchen".

[21] See p. 327: "Von Leuten, die einen Dialekt sprachen, wurden die volkstümlichen Spiele, die auf einer wohl höchst primitiven Bühne aufgeführt wurden, geschaffen. Dass sie dabei auf mythisch-religiöse Themen zurückgriffen, ist nicht erstaunlich". He refers to Winternitz III, p. 165 and Hillebrandt (see n. 13), p. 28: "Ganz in Übereinstimmung mit Winternitz führt Hillebrandt die wichtigsten Momente des klassischen Sanskritdramas auf die autochthonen, in Dialekt aufgeführten Spiele zurück".

[22] See Hillebrandt, p. 28 (quoted by Horsch): "Das die Dramen einleitende scheinbar improvisierte Zwiegespräch zwischen Theaterdirektor und Schauspielerin, die Anwendung verschiedener Dialekte, die Mischung von Prosa und Lied, die Verbindung mit Musik und Tanz, die Einfachheit der indischen Bühne, schliesslich die Figur des Vidūṣaka, sichern dem indischen Drama seine Entwicklung aus dem Volksstück, dem primitiven Mimus und niedern Schauspielerkreisen, die, in Indien autochthon, im Lande umherzogen, tanzten, musizierten, mimten und ihre Frauen zur Liebe hingaben". The idea that the *vidūṣaka* was a clown and as such had his origin in "popular" plays, particularly the mime, is fairly current. See Thieme, p. 38 (and pp. 50, 53f.), Feistel, p. 119f. and Samskrita Ranga Annual VI (1972), p. 7 "the figure of the *vidūṣaka* having indubiously developed in the sphere of popular entertainment".

[23] See Renou, p. 30.

"Preliminaries" (*pūrvaraṅga*), far from being a mere entertainment, was considered equal to a sacrifice for the benefit of the king and his country; secondly, the older situation as described by the Nāṭyaśāstra seems to have been that the sponsor and patron of a performance was mainly, if not exclusively, the king; thirdly, the oldest forms of the drama we know were based on the Vedic mythical picture of the world. In the light of these facts it seems highly questionable whether such terms as "Klerus" and "volkstümlich" are any help in understanding the driving forces behind the evolution which Horsch assumes, even though it may be correct that the Indian *gāthā*, in contrast to the sacred *ṛc*, got a profane character as a result of the orthodox ban on singing. The 19th century frame of reference with which Oldenberg at one time tried to explain certain aspects of Vedic religion is no longer adequate.

The basic fact is that for the Vedic period there are no other sources but an exclusively religious literature, clearly originating in circles which had both ideologically and sociologically a special character. Little is known of any other facet of the cultural and social life. Kings and *kṣatriya*s are only incidentally mentioned in so far as they come, as peripheral phenomena, within the range of vision of the poets or theologians. It is misleading, therefore, to call everything that is not mentioned in Vedic literature (and, accordingly, remains unknown) "volkstümlich", that is, belonging to "the people's culture". At best it might be termed "profane", if this is not taken as a category basically separated from and contrasting with "sacred". Hillebrandt has further introduced the autochthons into the discussion and Horsch (p. 327) follows him in this respect. Here, too, it is necessary to distinguish between facts and modern guess-work. Although direct knowledge about the aborigines is lacking, it can be stated that many of the names of Bharata's sons as given in the Nāṭyaśāstra (1.26–39) are obviously of foreign origin[24]. Some Yajurvedic texts (VS., TB.) associate the *śailūṣá* (which word later denotes the actor) with singing and dancing (*gītá* and *nṛttá*): it only proves that in those circles which felt themselves bound by the rules of the brahmins, people outside the three classes of Āryas were used when, for religious or not strictly religious purposes, singers and dancers were needed. Nothing is known about how far the rules of the brahmins were considered valid. It is certainly not advisable to look upon the precepts of brahmanical literature as a faithful picture of the real social life. Since nothing can possibly be said about the performance of dramas in that society, it is not necessary to dwell on the speculations of Hillebrandt, Horsch (p. 326) and others.

A few words must only be said about Horsch's conclusion, based upon Pāṇini IV.3.110, that there existed a dramatic theory (which presupposes performances) in the fifth or sixth century B.C. but that the Vedic hymns and the ritual were not the immediate precursors of the classical drama

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[24] See Gedenkschrift-Brandenstein, p. 83ff.

(p. 328 n. 4, p. 329f.)[25]. The first conclusion is not justified by the evidence[26]. As for the second point, Horsch is right. Since only a part of the top of the iceberg of Vedic culture is visible in the priestly literature, there is no reason to expect that here the starting-point for the later evolution of the drama can be found.

In the case of the *mahāvrata* ceremony, which has more than once been referred to as the missing link, the ritual has preserved an isolated instance of a ceremonial contest that must have stood central in Ancient Aryan social life. It must originally have been a ritual in which the whole community took part, not an amusement for the "masses" (as opposed to a social *élite*). Characterizing it as "ein religiöses Volksfest" may, therefore, easily evoke wrong associations. It is true, traces of cultural change can be seen in the fact that more primitive features were abolished in the course of time. Since, however, as a symbolical representation of the *svàrṣāti*, it must have been a seasonal ritual, it is hard to see why its origin should have been "im gemeinen Volke" (Horsch, p. 327). While speculations on "die volkstümlichen Spiele, die auf einer wohl höchst primitiven Bühne aufgeführt wurden" are contradicted by the historical evidence, which points to performances sponsored by kings, the mythic-religious subjects suggest the inference that the drama had, from the oldest (pre-literary) times onwards, a religious function. If this is correct, it raises the problem to a different level, the real question then no longer being that of "popular or non-popular" but of religious versus profane[27].

Two more theories must finally be mentioned. Thirty years ago J. Gonda put forward ample ethnographical material on which he based his view that the magical effect attributed to the representation of such acts as dancing, laughing and eating was one of the main roots from which the Sanskrit drama has sprung. It is impossible to summarize this paper, which contains many interesting remarks and deals extensively with the

[25] As against Sylvain Lévi, Hertel, von Schroeder, Hillebrandt, etc.

[26] It is not necessary to repeat what has been written about Pāṇini's *bhikṣunaṭa-sūtrayoḥ*, "ein Sūtra für Mimen" (Böhtlingk), rather than "règles des acteurs" (Renou). The uncertainty about what exactly was meant by *naṭa* at that time has been stressed by Lüders, Philologica Indica, p. 427: "wenn wir einmal etwas Bestimmteres über die Kunst der *naṭas* der älteren Zeit erfahren, hat es mit dem Drama gewöhnlich gar nichts zu tun". Cf. Konow, p. 48: "kann ebensogut ein Mime wie ein wirklicher Schauspieler gewesen sein", p. 43: "Es kann nach alledem nicht zweifelhaft sein, dass sie wirkliche Mimen waren . . .".

[27] A different point is that, whenever a cult act evolves into a piece of literary art, such as tragedy and comedy in Greece, there is always the possibility of secularization if in the context of the culture concerned the religious origin and character of the ritual is forgotten. In Greece Euripides dropped the chorus in his tragedies as an element that had become cumbersome and had lost its meaning. In India the *pārvaraṅga*, the religious *drōmenon* par excellence, was shortened and stripped of those elements which had at one time been of the highest importance, and new themes of a non-religious nature, as found in the "bourgeois" drama *(prakaraṇa)*, arose at an early date—so early, indeed, that it cannot even be proved on the basis of the dramas that have come down to us, that the *prakaraṇa* was the result of a later development of dramatic art. Its origin is still obscure, and probably will remain so as long as no fresh evidence comes to light. See below, p. 213.

general problem of the origin of the drama [28]. An entirely different thesis has been defended by Indu Shekar, who argued that the drama was a product of a non-Aryan culture of India. The present study will show why I think that the evidence available points to a different conclusion [29].

Finally, two ideas must be mentioned which in my opinion contain an important element of truth but which must be incorporated in a more comprehensive approach. The first, put forward in 1909 by M. Haraprasad Shastri, emphasizes the fact that according to the native tradition of the Bhāratīya Nāṭyaśāstra the first legendary dramatic performance took place on the occasion of Indra's Banner Festival (*Indradhvajamaha*). The importance of this ceremony will be discussed below [30], where it will be argued that the half-mythic, half-legendary form in which this tradition is embedded is no reason for questioning its fundamental correctness. The second theory has, as far as I can see, only been proposed by G. K. Bhat and has generally been rejected. In his opinion the *vidūṣaka* of the drama is historically connected with the Asuras of the Veda. The way he conceived this connection is, it is true, unacceptable and the argument in support of his view very weak [31]. In spite of these shortcomings, however, his theory deserves to be mentioned because in its essence it is, in my opinion, of greater importance than Bhat may have been aware of.

From this brief survey it emerges that there is such a chronological gap between the classical drama as we know it and its supposed origin that all attempts to bridge it must needs be conjectural [32]. Renou's

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[28] See J. Gonda, "Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung und Wesen des indischen Dramas", Acta or. 19 (1943), pp. 329–453. Renou reacted to this approach in the following words (p. 30), the purport of which is not quite clear to me: "Éclairer l'évolution préhistorique du théâtre sanskrit par le folklore peut amener des comparaisons intéressantes: l'inconvénient est que l'originalité d'un art savant se trouve diluée dans l'anonymat des structures élémentaires. Le fait sanskrit, ici comme ailleurs, est d'abord un fait singulier".

[29] Indu Shekar, Sanskrit Drama, Its Origin and Decline (Leiden, 1960). See Renou, p. 29 n. 4: "hypothèse souvent formulée pour d'autres secteurs de l'indianisme et qui semble dispenser d'explication interne rationnelle". An attempt to determine to what extent non-Aryan influence may have been at work, and what its limits were was made in Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft und Kulturkunde, Gedenkschrift für Wilhelm Brandenstein (1968), p. 82ff. It is true, influence of non-Aryan cultures has too often been invoked, without the slightest proof, as a *deus ex machina* to explain away difficult problems. If, however, there are specific (mostly linguistic) indications pointing to that conclusion, there is obviously no point in ignoring their existence, our task then being to try to understand what the role of the influence can have been in the whole context of Indian culture.

[30] M. Haraprasad Shastri, J. and Proc. As. Soc. Bengal 5 (1909), pp. 351–361 (especially p. 361), Raghavan, J. Or. Res. (Madras) 7, p. 41. This festival will be discussed below.

[31] G. K. Bhat, The Vidūṣaka (Ahmedabad, 1959), p. 45: "The evidence of the Nāṭyaśāstra and the Sanskrit literature shows that the earliest phase of the drama was marked by the Deva-Asura conflict, where the representation of Asura as a comic character provided the only possibility for humor", and *passim*. Indu Shekar (see fn. 29), p. 78, rejected this theory as "far-fetched and entirely conjectural".

[32] See Renou, p. 30.

characterization as a "problème difficile, insoluble peut-être" (p. 29) correctly summarizes the present situation. There is still a lack of agreement on one of the basic questions, viz. whether the origin of the drama was religious or profane. While Konow and Lüders assume a double origin and Renou's position, as usual, is non-committal[33], Thieme has made an interesting attempt at a logical reconstruction of the genesis on the basis of three existing theories, which started from dance, mime and shadow-play respectively. In his synthesis the mime, being a popular play without dance and music and with profane subjects[34] and, on the other hand, dance and shadow-plays with religious themes[35] have led to the emergence of the drama. In accordance with current theories[36] he then concludes that the *vidūṣaka's* part must have been "die Rolle eines reinen Spassmachers"[37] and that he, consequently, must have originated in the mime[38]. Since the Nāṭyaśāstra according to him nowhere refers to a specific part of the *vidūṣaka* in the drama[39], Thieme further assumes that originally the *vidūṣaka*'s role was limited to the so-called "prelude" (*pūrvaraṅga*). A difficulty is, however, that the oldest extant dramatic fragments, dating roughly from about 150 A.D., force the conclusion upon us "dass zu Aśvaghoṣas Zeit dem *vidūṣaka* die typische Rolle des Heldenfreundes durch feste Tradition bereits zugeteilt war"[40].

In view of the lacunary character of the tradition it can be understood that other scholars restrict themselves to the evidence of the classical drama – which, however, teaches us next to nothing about the prehistory and genesis of the drama. This position has succinctly been expressed in Renou's words of resignation: "la préhistoire du théâtre – il faut décidément y renoncer"[41].

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[33] For Lüders and Konow see above, n. 7. Also Gawroński assumed a double source, religious and "bardic" (see Renou, p. 31 n. 2; not accessible to me). See further Renou, p. 33 n. 3 and Dasgupta, p. 642.

[34] See Thieme, p. 38.

[35] Ibidem, p. 41.

[36] Konow, p. 14: "Es wird allgemein angenommen, dass der vidūṣaka eine alte Figur der Volksbühne ist, die das klassische Drama aus den Volksstücken der fahrenden Tänzer und Mimen übernommen hat"; p. 15: "Der vidūṣaka ist eben eine Figur der alten Volksstücke, in welchen die Sitten und das Benehmen der höheren Kasten, besonders der Brahmanen genau so, wie heutzutage, verspottet wurden"; p. 47: "die der Mimenbühne entnommene Gestalt des vidūṣaka". Cf. also Horsch, Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur, p. 343, where the *vidūṣaka* and the *viṭa* are characterized as "populäre Gestalten". On the *viṭa* see below, p. 233ff.

[37] Thieme, p. 53; cf. p. 50.

[38] *Ibidem*, pp. 40, 53. Cf. Feistel, p. 119!

[39] This is, as far as I can see, contradicted by NŚ. 19.17–18C *vayasya rājann iti vā bhaved vācyo mahīpatiḥ, vidūṣakeṇa rājñī ca ceṭī ca bhavatī 'ty api* [= 17.79–80 KM²].

[40] Thieme, p. 54. Similarly already Lüders, Philologica Indica, p. 208 and Konow, p. 50.

[41] Renou, p. 34.

2. THE BHĀRATĪYA NĀṬYAŚĀSTRA: THE RELIGIOUS CHARACTER OF THE DRAMATIC PERFORMANCE

Since the evidence that can be found in the existing classical dramas is so scarce, it is somewhat surprising that comparatively little use has been made of those indications about the origin of the drama which are contained in the handbook of dramaturgy known as the *Bhāratīya-nāṭyaśāstra*. This is the more striking as this Nāṭyaśāstra is rightly referred to in every discussion of the Sanskrit drama and as there exists a general agreement about its being anterior to all dramas that have been handed down to us, at least as far as its core is concerned. The explanation for this oversight is no doubt to be sought in the mythic form in which the obviously old and interesting tradition has been clothed. It is not difficult to understand the sceptical attitude of judicious European and Indian scholars. Sylvain Lévi was among the first to deny the value of this tradition when in 1890 he wrote: "La fable racontée par le Nâṭya-çâstra peut suffire à la pieuse crédulité des Indiens; la critique européenne ne saurait s'en contenter". Others have expressed similar opinions, e.g., S. K. De (1962): "The orthodox account of the origin of the Sanskrit drama, by describing it as a gift from heaven in the form of a developed art invented by the divine sage Bharata, envelops it in an impenetrable mist of myth; while modern scholarship, professing to find the earliest manifestation of a ritual drama in the dialogue-hymns of the *Ṛgveda* and presuming a development of the dramatic from the religious after the manner of the Greek drama, shrouds the question of its origin in a still greater mist of speculation" [42].

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[42] See Sylvain Lévi, Le théâtre indien, p. 299, S. K. De in: S. N. Dasgupta, A History of Sanskrit Literature I (see n. 1), p. 43 and cf. Adya Rangacharya, Drama in Sanskrit Literature[2] (1967), p. 31f. on the fifth Veda: "Every new school of thought in India has striven to claim and establish for itself the sanction of the Vedic texts. So a statement of the kind under question is more a tribute to the sanctity and hold of the Vedas than a reference to a fact". The notion of a fifth Veda has its roots in Chānd. Up. VII.1.2, where, elaborating on the traditional enumeration ... *sāmavedo 'tharvāṅgirasa itihāsaḥ purāṇam* ... (BĀUp. II.4.10, IV.1.2, V.5.11) the text has *ātharvaṇaṁ caturtham itihāsapurāṇaṁ pañcamaṁ (vedānām ...)*, which the BhāgPur. I.4.20 paraphrases as *itihāsapurāṇaṁ ca pañcamo veda ucyate*. The Rāmāyaṇa I.1.77 calls itself "equal to the Vedas" *(vedaiś ca saṁmitam)* and it is said that the Mahābhārata is considered a fifth Veda (A. Barth, Œuvres III, p. 473, M. Krishnamachariar, History of class. Skt. Lit., p. 30) but except in a śloka found in the beginning and at the end (Mhbh. I.1.205, 56.17, XVIII.57* *kārṣṇaṁ vedam imaṁ vidvāñ śrāvayitvā 'rtham aśnute*), the late interpolation after VII.173.107 *kārṣṇas tu pañcamo vedo yan Mahābhāratam smṛtam* (in Ś. K_2. K_3. D_1 pp. 1059–1062) and some passages which are not explicit (I.1.208 *catvāra ekato vedā Bhāratam caikam ekataḥ*, XVIII.36* *vedāḥ sāṅgās tathaikatra Bhāratam caikataḥ sthitam)*, the epic refers to itself as an *ākhyāna*, being the fifth after the Vedas; cf. III.55.230* *yo 'dhīte caturo vedān sarvān ākhyānapañcamān*, V.43.23 *ākhyāna-pañcamair vedaiḥ*. The expression "equal to the Veda(s)" also occurs in the Mahābhārata but only once, as far as I can see, with reference to the epic itself, and that in a spurious śloka occurring in a passage where the text "is in a chaotic condition" (I.56.27ff.). The relevant lines run as follows (I, App. 33, lines 17–19= I.62.48–49 Bomb. ed.) *tathā Bhāratam ucyate* [scil. *ratnadhi*], *idaṁ hi vedaiḥ*

Only G. K. Bhat, as far as I know, has defended the (relative) value and importance of the data of the Nāṭyaśāstra with respect to the problem of the origin of the drama[43]. It will be the object of the present study to show that on closer investigation the mythical story of this work turns out to lend itself much more to a rational interpretation than may appear at first sight. On the other hand an analysis of a number of details of the *pūrvaraṅga* discloses the existence of an underlying structure, which throws a new light on the historical background of the drama.

Although the work, in its present somewhat chaotic state of different versions, no doubt contains a great deal of later accretions, it is almost generally accepted that the original Nāṭyaśāstra, which was the prototype of the first part of the various versions now extant, must have been earlier than all the dramas known at present. Estimations vary between 150 A.D. (or earlier) and about 350 A.D.[44].

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saṁmitaṁ pavitram api cottamam, śravyaṁ śrutisukhaṁ caiva ... In the other passages it is mostly an epithet of *purāṇa* or *itihāsa*, cf. XII.326.106 *tebhyas tac chrāvayām āsa purāṇaṁ vedasaṁmitam*, 335.7 *kathayiṣyāmi te sarvaṁ purāṇaṁ vedasaṁmitam, jagau yad bhagavān Vyāso* . . ., 335.72 *etad Dhayaśiro rājann ākhyānaṁ tava kīrtitaṁ, purāṇaṁ vedasaṁmitaṁ yan māṁ tvaṁ paripṛcchasi*, XVIII.5.43 *itihāsam imaṁ puṇyaṁ mahārthaṁ vedasaṁmitam, śrāvayed yas tu* . . ., VII.173.101 *dhanyaṁ yaśasyam āyuṣyaṁ puṇyaṁ vedaiś ca saṁmatam* (!) ... *vyākhyātaṁ śatarudriyam* (cf. the variant reading in XIII.17.169 ... *stavam* . . ., *svargyam ārogyam āyuṣyaṁ dhanyaṁ vedena saṁmitam*). As a v. l. it also occurs in XIII.61.33 *vyāhṛtim* ... *vedasaṁmitām*. In the same way the Nāṭyaśāstra describes in its introductory part (1.4) how the munis interrogated Bharata about the Nāṭyaveda "equal to the Vedas" which he had composed: *yo 'yaṁ bhagavatā samyag grathito vedasaṁmitaḥ, nāṭyavedaḥ* . . .

[43] See G. K. Bhat, The Vidūṣaka (1959), p. 19: "There is a tendency to disregard the evidence furnished by tradition, but this is unjustified. It is certainly necessary to sift all such evidence very carefully; but when such evidence is nearly all that we possess as a starting point of an inquiry it cannot be treated lightly, much less ignored, as it has been done. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata and the actual dramas must lead our way, I think, to the solution of the present problem".

[44] From the various guesses the following may be mentioned: Konow, Das indische Drama, p. 2 (with references) considered it to be only slightly earlier than Bhāsa (towards the end of the 2nd century A.D.? Konow, p. 51) and dated it to the 2nd century (p. 49). S. K. De, Sanskrit Poetics I[2], p. 31 wrote: "The lower limit of the date of Bharata's work, therefore, can be provisionally shifted back to the fourth or fifth century A.D., while it is almost certain that it existed in its present shape in the 8th century A.D. The upper limit cannot be put too early" (cf. p. 29 and p. 18 with references). P. V. Kane, History of Sanskrit Poetics[3] (1961), p. 41 (with references) thinks "that before 300 A.D. there existed a work on *nāṭyaśāstra* ascribed to *Bharata* and dealing with the rasa theory and dramaturgy in general" (similarly p. 47). Cf. p. 20: "That most of the chapters now found were in existence from at least the 3rd or 4th century A.D. follows from several considerations"; p. 43: [These details] however, make it probable that the present Nāṭyaśāstra is not much older than the beginning of the Christian era"; p. 21: "the present Nāṭyaśāstra existed at least a century or two earlier than 350–450 A.D., i.e. in the 3rd or 4th century, if not earlier". Thieme, p. 52 (cf. p. 35) considers it to be earlier than Aśvaghoṣa and Bhāsa, i.e. earlier than the 2nd century A.D. Similarly H.-O. Feistel, Das Vorspiel auf dem Theater, pp. 138, 136 (after the beginning of the 1st century A.D.), Samskrita Ranga Annual VI, p. 26 (the kernel of the NŚ. probably composed in

Since the tradition referred to above is mainly contained in the first chapter of the Nāṭyaśāstra, it is necessary, before proceeding to a close analysis of that chapter, to note that according to one scholar this is a late addition to the work. Since experience teaches us that the first and last portions of literary works have a greater chance of being additions than the main body, this opinion has to be taken seriously, the more so as it emanates from a well-known scholar. P. V. Kane, History of Sanskrit Poetics[3-4] (1961–71) assumes that chapter I, and probably the next four chapters, were added some centuries before the fifth century A.D. (p. 20) to raise the status of dramatic art (p. 22). They were, accordingly, "comparatively late additions" (p. 16, cf. p. 41). All this, it is true, is advanced as "a very tentative theory" (p. 18). I fail to see, however, any decisive arguments in favour of Kane's rather startling supposition[45]. As will be shown below, the first chapter contains such Vedic reminiscences as to exclude a comparatively late origin. On account of its contents it is hard to imagine that it was originally composed as a separate work. It was obviously conceived as the introductory part of a work on dramaturgy. Since the sixth chapter immediately starts, without any introduction, with the theory of the *rasa*s, this cannot possibly have been the original beginning of the Nāṭyaśāstra. If Kane were right, the first five chapters would have taken the place of the original introduction. Since, however, the *pūrvaraṅga* was of the highest importance because it comprised the ritual for the "consecration" of the stage, it is hard to believe that the hypothetical older version of the work had not contained a special chapter on this ritual. As a consequence of Kane's theory, the present fifth chapter, which deals extensively with the *pūrvaraṅga* and which is full of interesting details of an archaic character, would have been substituted for an older version. I fail to see any internal evidence for such a substitution. Both the first and the fifth chapter must to all appearances have belonged to the oldest stratum of the work. This conclusion is based on the analysis of these chapters which will be given in the next sections. As for the other chapters, only a critical analysis, which is outside the scope of this study, could determine their relation to these two chapters. From the point of view of composition, the second chapter, for instance, differs so much from the first that it is hard to believe that it has been composed by the same author. Possibly it has been inserted at a later date.

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the 1st century A.D.). So there is a certain agreement about the first or second century as the time of origin of the older parts. The only exception is Manomohan Ghosh, who at first placed the date between 100 B.C. and 200 A.D. (which "cannot be far from the truth", Kane, p. 41f.), but in the second editions of his text and translation of 1967 changed this into 500 B.C. See The Nāṭyaśāstra ascribed to Bharatamuni, Vol. I², Introduction, p. lxxxii, Translation I², Introduction, p. lxv. As for the date of Bhāsa it may be noted that only Pusalkar and D. S. Pathak have considered him to be earlier than the Nāṭyaśāstra (see the references in Feistel, Das Vorspiel, p. 128 n. 5).

[45] Quoted without comment by S. K. De, Sanskrit Poetics I² (1960), p. 28 n. 1.

An analysis of the first chapter of the Nāṭyaśāstra leads to the conclusion that the drama, and in particular its performance as a *drōmenon*, had a religious character. In the introductory verses it is related how the *munis* asked Bharata to inform them about the origin, the aim and the performance (*prayoga*) of the *nāṭyaveda*, which is here called "equal to the (four) Vedas" (see n. 42). According to the story as Bharata then tells it, Indra and the other gods, at the beginning of the Tretayuga, asked Brahmā for a play (*krīḍanīyaka*) which could be seen and heard [46]. As they pointed out to him, knowledge of the four Vedas was not allowed to the Śūdras. There was a need, therefore, for a fifth Veda, to which all classes could be admitted (1.12 *sārvavarṇika*). After being sunk in meditation Brahmā then creates, on the basis of the four Vedas, the Nāṭyaśāstra as a fifth Veda. The fiction that it consists of elements of the four Vedas, the dramatic art being a combination of recitation (*pāṭhya*) from the Rigveda, singing (*gīta*) from the Sāmaveda, dramatic action (*abhinaya*) from the Yajur, and sentiments (*rasāḥ*) from the Atharvaveda [47], can here be ignored.

The term *nāṭyaveda*, mostly used, it seems, in this connection, stresses the religious character of dramatic art as a Veda. As a *karmadhāraya* compound it means "the Veda that is the drama" and is almost synonymous with *nāṭya* alone [48]. Thus it can be said that the Nāṭyaveda was performed [49].

It is clear that this legendary story is a fiction, and this has rightly been stated by Sylvain Lévi and others (above, p. 118). It is also evident

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[46] 1.11 *dṛśyaṁ śravyaṁ ca yad bhavet.*

[47] 1.17 Cf., e.g., Nāṭyaśāstrasaṁgraha 9 *pāṭhyam abhinayān gītaṁ rasān saṁgṛhya Padmabhūḥ* (10) *vyarīracat trayam idaṁ dharmakāmārthamokṣadam* . . . etc.

[48] According to Feistel, p. 100, the word has been created in analogy to Ṛgveda, etc. As the name of the fifth Veda, it is certainly parallel to those of the other Vedas but it is a *karmadhāraya* compound "the Veda that consists of the drama", cf. 1.20 *nāṭyasaṁjño hi vedaḥ.* As such it is almost synonymous with *nāṭya*, except that it stresses its religious character as a creation of Brahmā. It is, therefore, mainly used, it seems, in the first chapter and where *nāṭya* is contrasted with the other Vedas, e.g., 1.4 *yo 'yaṁ Bhagavatā samyag grathito vedasaṁmitaḥ, nāṭyavedaḥ* . . . (in the versification of the BhNŚ (just as in the Mhbh.) *samyak* functions as a stop-gap at the end of the odd pādas, cf. 1.51, 4.12, 5.30, 32, 179), 7 *śrūyatāṁ, nāṭyavedasya saṁbhavo,* 16 *nāṭyavedaṁ tataś cakre,* 18 *vedopavedaiḥ saṁbaddho nāṭyavedo mahātmanā,* 19 *utpādya nāṭyavedaṁ tu,* 102 *yo 'yaṁ Bhagavatā sṛṣṭo nāṭyavedaḥ surecchayā* (: 4.12 *aho nāṭyam idaṁ samyak tvayā sṛṣṭam*), 22.22 *nāṭyavedasamutpannā vāg-aṅgā'bhinayātmikā* (: 23 Ṛgveda, etc.), 36.8 *nāṭyavedasya niścayam*, etc. For 1.6 *Bharato muniḥ, pratyuvāca tato vākyaṁ nāṭyavedakathāṁ prati* "about the tale of the Nāṭya-Veda", cf. 4.329C *bhūyaḥ kiṁ kathyatāṁ viprā nāṭyayogavidhiṁ prati* "about the performance of the yoga that consists of the drama" (v. l. *anyan nāṭyavedavidhiṁ prati* 4.320B²), 5.179 *bhūyaḥ kiṁ kathyatāṁ samyaṅ nāṭyavedavidhiṁ prati* "about the performance of the Veda 'Drama' " (not "das Wissen, das das Schauspiel ist", Feistel, p. 100). *Vidhi* here means "Ausführung", rather than "Vorschrift" (Feistel, l.c.), cf., e.g., 5.60 *prayujya gītakavidhim,* 142 *sarvam evaṁ vidhiṁ kṛtvā,* 163 *nṛttagītavidhiṁ prati,* 4.322 *bhāṇḍavādyavidhiṁ prati.*

[49] 1.55 *ayaṁ vedo nāṭyasaṁjñaḥ prayujyatām* "This Veda which bears the name 'Drama' must now be performed".

that, once the general pattern had been given, it could be elaborated, as has been done, e.g., in the last detail mentioned about the elements taken from the four Vedas [50]. The question remains to be answered whether the fiction was a mere literary artifice or whether it had, in the last resort, a mythical character. At all events, the fact that the dramatic art is called a fifth Veda shows that the drama was considered to belong to the domain of religion, not to that of entertainment. Was this claim well-founded?

As is well known, in theory and practice a dramatic performance consisted of two parts, the *pūrvaraṅga* and the play proper. The importance of the *pūrvaraṅga* for the success of the performance and, accordingly, also for our insight into the original character of the drama, has not sufficiently been understood and translations such as "Vorspiel auf dem Theater", inspired by Goethe's reviving the Indian tradition, can easily lead to wrong conclusions. When the character of the *pūrvaraṅga* is defined as "a ritual of worshipping the gods" [51] this is only a late and weak reflex of the ancient *drōmenon*, the performance of rites, which the *pūrvaraṅga* clearly was.

Fortunately the author of the Nāṭyaśāstra was still fully acquainted with these rites [52] so that here we stand on solid ground. In later times, when the real nature of these "preliminaries" was no longer understood, the *pūrvaraṅga* must gradually have dwindled down to a short formality, although we have no direct information about this development. The older meaning of the preliminaries, however, was to enact the banner festival and transform the stage into the sacred world. The Nāṭyaśāstra states expressly that the "worship of the gods" (in which formula the ritual of the consecration is often summed up) is equal to the Vedic sacrifice (*yajña*) [53]. The verb *yaj-* is also used to denote the "worshipping of the stage" (*raṅgapūjana*) [54], another term for the same consecration, and the Nāṭyaśāstra says that "hearing recitation, song and music is equal to words which express the contents of a sacred text of the Veda" [55].

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[50] Similarly the story of Brahmā's asking Indra to perform with the other gods the *itihāsa* which he has composed (1.19) and Indra's refusal, after which Brahmā gives it to Bharata (1.22–25) and his hundred sons (1.40).

[51] NŚ. 36.29 *devatābhyarcanam*, 32.483 *devatāpūjādhikāraḥ*, Sāgaranandin, NLRK. 2159/250 (also quoted by Raṅganātha ad Vikram. I.1) *pūrvaraṅgo bhaved eṣām (bhavet teṣām) ādau devārcanavidhiḥ*, see n. 53.

[52] Although sometimes he already defined the aims of a dramatical performance in terms of entertainment. See below, n. 75.

[53] 1.126, 3.96C *yajñena saṁmitaṁ hy etad raṅgadaivatapūjanam.*

[54] 3.93C *samyag iṣṭas tu raṅgo vai.* Cf. 5.112C, where the *nāndī* ends with the words *ijyayā cā 'nayā nityaṁ prīyantāṁ devatā iti* (v. l. *sarvadevatā* in one MS.). The word *ijyā* here probably refers to the *pūrvaraṅga*, although it is possible to take it as referring to the whole performance (Feistel, p. 70).

[55] In the last chapter (36.26C[1]), which is probably a later addition: *pāṭhyaṁ śrutvā tathā caiva gānaṁ vāditram eva ca, vedamantrārthavacanaiḥ samaṁ hy etad bhaviṣyati.* The reading of 36.21 KM[2] differs considerably *(vādyaṁ nāṭyaṁ tathā geyaṁ citraṁ vāditram eva ca, vedamantrārthavacanaiḥ . . .)* but *vādyam* is here redundant: it sometimes occurs, it is true, in conjunction with *gīta* (e.g., 5.149C *vādyagītapramāṇena*,

While in such passages the drama, *or the pūrvaraṅga*, is equated to a sacrifice, others show that a *nāṭya* was sometimes performed simultaneously with a sacrifice, as in Harivaṁśa II.91.25 Bomb. ed. (No. 29F, 51–52 crit. ed.). "While the sacrifice there took place, a *naṭa* named Bhadranāman satisfied the Maharṣis with a good performance" [56]. It remains doubtful, it is true, what the word *sunāṭya* here exactly denotes. Keith rendered it by "his excellent power of representation" but a mere dance may have been meant. This is apparently the meaning of *nāṭya* in Kālidāsa's Mālavikāgnimitra, where dancing is described as follows: "The Ṛṣis consider this to be a charming visual sacrifice for the gods . . . dancing, although of manifold forms, still is one and the same amusement for people of different tastes" [57]. As is apparent from the last quotations the meanings "dance" and "dramatic performance" cannot always easily be distinguished. What is said of the former, is also true of the latter: both were regarded as a special form of sacrifice.

This was not a simple metaphor. The Vedic sacrifice was performed at the expense and for the benefit of the *yajamāna* by a group of officiating priests, who released him from ritual impurity. Just so the drama can be looked upon as a *drōmenon* accomplished by a group of actors at the patron's expense, who is denoted either by more neutral names such as *prekṣākartṛ*, *prekṣāpati*, *arthapati*, *sabhāpati*, or by terms such as *bhartṛ* and *svāmin*, which also denoted the king [58]. In the light of this parallelism the reward given to the actors [59] can be compared to the *dakṣiṇā* of the priests.

In connection with this suggestion a point on which there is much difference of opinion must here briefly be touched upon. This is the question as to the place of the drama in social life. In spite of its being intended for all classes (1.12 *sārvavarṇika*) the general impression one gets from the Nāṭyaśāstra is that the author constantly had the king in mind as the common "patron" of performances, although it is nowhere stated that this patronage was a royal prerogative. The vagueness of the text in this respect is reflected by modern studies. As an illustrative instance

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164 *gīte vādye ca nṛtte ca*), but so does *pāṭhya* (cf. 2.21 *pāṭhyaṁ ca geyaṁ ca*) and *gītavāditre* "song and instrumental music" is attested as early as Chānd. Up. VIII.2.8.

[56] Harivaṁśa II.91.25 (8575) *tatra yajñe vartamāne sunāṭyena naṭas tadā, maharṣīṁs toṣayām āsa Bhadranāme 'ti nāmataḥ*, quoted by PW. IV, col. 99 V, col. 194 *(Bhadra)*, Hertel, WZKM. 24, p. 118, Keith, p. 48. The passage, however, occurs in the long episode *Pārijātaharaṇa* (II.65–97), which according to P. L. Vaidya (Crit. ed. I, p. xxxiii) must have been interpolated after 1050 A.D. and has, therefore, been excluded from the text of the critical edition (see App. I, No. 29F, line 51).

[57] Kālidāsa, Mālavikāgnimitra I.4 *devānām idam āmananti munayaḥ kāntaṁ kratuṁ cākṣusam, . . . nāṭyaṁ bhinnarucer janasya bahudhā 'py ekaṁ samārādhanam*. Quoted by Thieme, p. 37.

[58] E.g., 5.111C *prekṣākartṛ*, Abhinavagupta I, p. 55 (ad 2.29 *svāmin*) *prekṣāpati*, 1.127 *arthapati*. For *sabhāpati* see Balbir, IIJ. 6 (1962), p. 44. For *svāmin* see the foot-notes 64 and 68; *bhartṛ* occurs, e.g., 27.98.

[59] See M. M. Ghosh, note on his translation of 1.58–61.

may be quoted Keith's subchapter on "the Audience" [60]. After having pointed out that the audience should be cultivated, critical and experienced, he goes on to say (p. 370):

> "The rules for placing the patron at whose bidding the drama is performed, Sabhāpati, and his guests, are elaborate [61]. He sits himself on the Lion Throne, the equivalent of the royal box, with the ladies of his harem on the left, and on the right the personages of highest importance, such as the vassal princes of a great king like Harṣa. Behind the latter are the treasurer and other officers, and near them the learned men of the court, civil and religious, including the poets, and in their midst the astrologers and physicians. On the left again are the ministers and other courtiers; all around are maidens of the court. In front again of the king [!] are Brahmins, behind the bearers of fans, radiant in youthful beauty. On the left in front are the reciters and panegyrists, eloquent and wise. Guards are present to protect the sacred person of the sovereign [!]. How far the dramas were viewed by the public in general we cannot say; the rules regarding the play-house contemplate the presence of Çūdras, but that is a vague term, and may apply to a very restricted class of royal hangers-on. We have the general rule that barbarians, ignorant people, heretics, and those of low class should not be admitted, but such prescriptions mean very little".

It may be added that BhNŚ. 2.46–53 mentions four particular pillars relating to the four social classes in a context where the cosmic meaning of the playhouse is stressed.

This quotation illustrates how in these discussions the patron and sponsor is almost automatically identified with the king. The latter is supposed to attend the performance [62] and to decide to which actor the *patākā* (prize) is assigned [63].

The way the ritual prescribed for the building of a playhouse and that of the *pūrvaraṅga* were performed had a direct favourable or unfavourable effect on the king and the whole country. In the discussion of the prescriptions of how to measure out the future theatre with a "white string", it is said "when the string is broken in half, the king will certainly die; when it is broken into three pieces a political disorder will arise in the country" [64]. This is reminiscent of the rules for erecting the

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[60] The Sanskrit Drama, p. 369ff.

[61] Keith here refers to Saṁgītaratnākara 1327ff., S. Lévi I, p. 375ff. and Kāvyamīmāṁsā p. 54f. For the seats for Śūdras in the theatre see, e.g., Keith, p. 359.

[62] See, e.g., 2.59 *purohitaṁ nṛpaṁ caiva bhojayen madhupāyasaiḥ*, 3.83 *nṛpater nartakīnāṁ ca kuryād dīptyabhivardhanam, abhidyotya sahā 'todyair nṛpatiṁ nartakīs tathā* (84) *mantrapūtena toyena punar abhyukṣya tān vadet: mahākule prasūtāś ca guṇaughaiś cā 'py alaṁkṛtāḥ!* (85) *yad vo janmaguṇopetaṁ tad vo bhavatu nityaśaḥ, evam uktvā tato vākyaṁ nṛpater bhūtaye budhaḥ* (86) *nāṭyayogaprasiddhyartham āśiṣaḥ saṁprayojayet.*

[63] See 27.77 *ghātā yasya tv alpā saṁkhyātāḥ siddhayaś ca bahudhā syuḥ, viditaṁ kṛtvā rājñe tasmai deyā patākā tu* (78) . . . *siddhyadhike tu patākā samasiddhau vā 'jñayā nṛpateḥ* (79) *atha narapatiḥ samaḥ syād ubhāv api tu lambhanīyau tau.*

[64] 2.29 *ardhacchinne bhavet sūtre svāmino maraṇaṁ dhruvam, tribhāgacchinnayā rajjvā rāṣṭrakopo vidhīyate* "If the string is broken into two pieces, the king will surely die; when broken into three pieces, the string causes political disorder". Since the context deals with disasters befalling the country, *svāmin* must refer to the king as *prekṣāpati*. It may be conjectured that in Abhinavagupta's time it was no longer

Indra-banner[65]. The pillars of the playhouse must be auspicious for the king[66] and the *jarjara* is implored to give victory and prosperity to the king[67].

In view of these facts it is natural to interpret the word *svāmin* in 2.29[68] not only as the patron (*prekṣāpati*, as Abhinavagupta glosses it), but more specifically as the king. It is no doubt true that "der Spielgeber (*sabhāpati*) ist häufig ein Fürst oder eine andere hervorragende Persönlichkeit"[69]. All such general statements, however, which are bound to be vague because our sources are so, do not answer the basic question, viz., Is it at all conceivable that in older times other persons than the sovereign were entitled to organize and sponsor a performance which had such an influence on the whole country and its king? Again and again the Nāṭyaśāstra says that the rites, e.g. those for the consecration of a new playhouse, are of immediate importance for the king, who will either be threatened by his enemies or conquer them[70]. Also the ritual preparations on the stage must be duly performed so as to be auspicious for the king[71]. Even in the last chapter, apparently of later date, the "prosperity of the king" is mentioned in connection with the *nāndī* (introductory prayer)[72]. All this need not, it is true, imply that the theatre had necessarily to be built by a king but the first clear statement to the contrary that I know of, dates from about 1200–1300 A.D., when Śāradātanaya wrote that "the audience in this theatre should be only males, consisting, besides the king, of proprietors of other theatres

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self-evident that the patron was the king. Indirectly his gloss would seem to confirm the conclusion which will be drawn below (n. 73) from Śāradātanaya (about 1200–1300 A.D.).

[65] See VarBS. 42.58 *acchinnarajjum . . . utthāpayel lakṣma.*

[66] NŚ. 2.61 *abhimantrya yathānyāyaṁ stambham utthāpayec chuciḥ : yathā 'calo girir Merur Himavāṁś ca yathā 'calaḥ* (62) *jayāvaho narendrasya tathā tvam acalo bhava!*

[67] NŚ. 3.81 *jayaṁ cā 'bhyudayaṁ caiva pārthivāya prayaccha naḥ.*

[68] For Lévi's and Konow's theory that *svāmin* is a Sanskrit translation of *muruṇḍa*, title of the Śaka kings, and the conclusions drawn from it see Keith's summary (p. 71). P. V. Kane, while objecting that in the Nāṭyaśāstra *svāmin* is prescribed as a term of address for the prince royal (19.12 *yuvarāja*, see History of Sanskrit Poetics[3], p. 41), disregards the fact that, e.g. at 3.93: 94 *svāmin* is used as synonym of *nṛpa* (see n. 71). A similar case is 2.29 (see above, n. 64). This use as a *term of address* for the king is sanctioned by the Sāhityadarpaṇa VI.144 (431), which, however, restricts its use to the servants *(bhṛtya)*.

[69] Konow, p. 8.

[70] NŚ. 3.87 *homaṁ kṛtvā yathānyāyaṁ havir mantrapuraskṛtam* (88) *bhi(n)dyāt kumbhaṁ tataś caiva nāṭyācāryaḥ prayatnataḥ, abhinne tu bhavet kumbhe svāminaḥ śatruto bhayam* (89) *bhinne caiva tu vijñeyaḥ svāminaḥ śatrusaṁkṣayaḥ.* For the meaning of these verses see below, p. 162ff.

[71] NŚ. 3.93 *samyag iṣṭas* (consecrated) *tu raṅgo vai svāminaḥ śubham āvahet* (94) *purasyā 'bālavṛddhasya tathā janapadasya ca, duriṣṭas tu tathā raṅgo daivatair duradhiṣṭhitaḥ* (95) *nāṭyavidhvaṁsanaṁ kuryāt nṛpasya ca tathā 'śubham.*

[72] NŚ. 36.24C[1] *yāvat taṁ pūrayed deśaṁ dhvanir ātodyasaṁśrayaḥ, na sthāsyanti hi rakṣāṁsi na ca vighnavināyakāḥ* (25) *āvāhe ca vivāhe ca yajñe nṛpatimaṅgale, nāndīśabdam upaśrutya hiṁsrā naśyanti sarvadā.* Cf. 5.110 *praśāstv imāṁ mahārājaḥ pṛthivīṁ ca sasāgarām.*

(*para-maṇḍapika*) and the chief citizens" [73]. The lack of explicitness of the older sources, however, leaves room for divergent opinions.

As for the occasions on which the drama was performed, they are not conclusive as regards the personage of the patron. What the Nāṭyaśāstra says of dancing may have been generally true of dramatic performances: 'In general dancing is by nature liked by every one; and dancing is declared to be auspicious on the occasion of marriage, child-birth, reception of a son-in-law, joyous religious festivals, etc.; dancing is also called a source of amusement" [74]. Although some occasional expressions such as "it creates beauty" or "giving amusement" [75] seem to refer to a purely aesthetic appreciation, the indications pointing to an originally ritual character of the performance are too strong to be questioned on this ground. In this connection the following summary of some of Schärer's conclusions about the Ngaju Dayak should be noted: ". . . among the Ngaju Dayak the two months between the old and the new year, when all the agricultural tasks are finished, are considered the most proper time for contracting marriages. It is the time between the expiry of one period and the beginning of another in the existence of the world: the time of a new creation. This is also the period in which the community celebrates its major religious feasts. The *tree of life* is then erected, later to be destroyed again. All sorts of *contests* are organised and *theatrical performances* held. The wedding is one of these major religious feasts, for to be married means to enter a new stage of the sacred life. It is the same kind of event as birth, initiation and death . . ." (J. J. Ras, Bijdr. Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde 109 (1973), p. 453f. Italics his).

For determining the character of the ancient performances the number of spectators is naturally important. The interpretation of the prescriptions for the building of a theatre is, however, notoriously a moot point. The wording of the text lends itself to very divergent explanations. M. M. Ghosh arrives on the basis of his interpretation at the conclusion that the theatre which the author had in mind can at best have accommodated about four hundred spectators [76]. He, therefore, assumes that "dramatic spectacles meant for the common people were held in the open halls

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[73] Bhāvaprakāśana, p. 295, line 10. The Nāṭyaśāstra differs from Śāradātanaya in that it refers to the presence of *strībālamūrkhāḥ*, see IIJ. 16, p. 243 n. 10.

[74] NŚ. 4.269 *prāyeṇa sarvalokasya nṛttam iṣṭaṁ svabhāvataḥ, maṅgalyam iti kṛtvā ca nṛttam etat prakīrtitam* (270) *vivāha-prasavā'vāhapramodā'bhyudayādiṣu, vinoda-karaṇaṁ caiva nṛttam etat prakīrtitam.*

[75] Cf. 4.268 *śobhāṁ janayati*, 1.120 *vinodajananaṁ loke* (cf. 4.270 *vinodakaraṇam*, quoted in the preceding foot-note, 5.165 *rāgajanaka*). See also 2.21 *yasmāt pāṭhyaṁ ca geyaṁ ca sukhaṁ śravyataraṁ bhavet*, which, however, more concerns the technical aspect of acoustics in the play-house.

[76] Ghosh, Translation, Introd. p. li; Mankad, Ancient Indian Theatre (1950), p. 11, considered two possible solutions, viz. 500–600 or 20.000 spectators for the smaller type of theatre, and 1500 or 25.000 for the larger one. The possibility of a covered building accomodating 20.000 or 25.000 spectators cannot seriously be considered. The mere comparison with the open-air theatres of Greece is sufficient to show

called the Nāṭ-mandir (Nāṭya-mandira) in front of temples, or in a temporarily devised theatre under the cover of a canopy, as in the case of the modern Bengali Yātrās which seem to have unmistakable resemblance and connexion with the ancient Indian Nāṭya described in the NŚ" (p. li). As far as I can see, this is pure speculation, without any support of the Nāṭyaśāstra, which everywhere seems to refer to a walled building[77]. Nowhere in this text can a confirmation be found for the existence of separate buildings "for the common people" – a distinction also made by Mankad[78] – in addition to the regular playhouses. Since the lack of precise information has naturally led to all kinds of speculations, it may be added in conclusion that also Keith's words to the effect that "At great festivals, when plays were given in the temples, there must have been admission for as many as could be crowded in" cannot be substantiated with the evidence at hand. The Nāṭyaśāstra, at least, does not mention, as far as I can see, any other place for performances than the playhouse especially built and consecrated for it. That temples have been used for this purpose is just possible but cannot be proved [cf. p. 241].

The final conclusion to be drawn from the facts mentioned is that the classical Sanskrit drama must have been composed and performed for an *élite*. As far back as 1890 Sylvain Lévi already pointed out what high requirements the spectators had to meet: "Tous les spectateurs ne sont pas aptes à goûter le rasa; c'est une sorte de récompense qu'il faut mériter par une étude assidue des poèmes et par des impressions saines et délicates accumulées pendant les existences antérieures"[79] and Winternitz rightly characterized the drama as "das wertvollste Erzeugnis der höfischen Kunstdichtung"[80]. This has been the conclusion of most scholars. Only

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that the technical problems of such huge buildings could hardly have been mastered in ancient India but, even apart from this negative argument, the indications pointing to a comparatively small audience are sufficient to dismiss Mankad's alternative.

[77] The Nāṭyaśāstra uses, without any perceptible distinction, the terms *nāṭyāgāra* (34.79C^1 = 24.53 KM^2), *nāṭyaveśman* (2.2, 4, etc.), *veśman* (2.10, 20), *nāṭyamaṇḍapa* (2.3, 6, 18, 25, cf. 14.1), *maṇḍapa* (2.8, 17, 19), *nāṭyagṛha* (2.31, 3.1), *prekṣāgṛha* (2.7, 12, 21), *geha* (2.23) and, as a very general, non-specific, term *bhavana* "building" (2.11). All these terms denote covered buildings. Cf. also Lévi II, p. 62, Jones, JAOS. 93, p. 288.

[78] See D. R. Mankad, Ancient Indian Theatre (1950), p. 23: "the *Śilparatna* tries to describe the Nāṭyamaṇḍapa which was usually attached to the Royal palace, while the Nāṭyaśāstra describes the usual theatres which were mostly meant for the ordinary people". Macdonell's supposition (in A History of Sanskrit Literature [1900], p. 352) that in the Indian Middle Ages plays were performed in the concert-room *(saṁgītaśālā)* of royal palaces was rejected by Haraprasad Shastri, J. and Proc. As. Soc. Bengal 5 (1909), p. 353, who also referred to the term *prekṣāgṛha*, Prakrit *pekkhāgharaa*. But see S. Lévi II, p. 62.

[79] See Le théâtre indien, p. 258.

[80] See Geschichte der indischen Litteratur III, p. 160. Similarly J. K. Balbir, IIJ. 6 (1962), p. 44: "it is obvious that Sanskrit drama was intended to be a drama of the *élite*, written by master-artists, played on special occasions by finished actors, and enjoyed by qualified persons. It was a refined product religiously presented as an offering before a discriminating audience".

Konow, after stating "In dem klassischen Drama wird es überhaupt vorausgesetzt, dass das Publikum ein gebildetes ist", then adds the words "Auch das grosse Publikum hat aber ohne Zweifel eine gewisse Kenntnis von den technischen Mitteln der Schauspieler gehabt" [81]. Whoever has read the definition of the *prekṣaka* in BhNŚ. 27.49ff. and considered it in connection with the other data will question the correctness of this speculation. In its origin the drama was rather a ritual performed on the initiative, in the presence, and for the benefit of the king.

3. BHĀRATĪYA-NĀṬYAŚĀSTRA CH. I: DATE AND PARTICULARS OF THE LEGENDARY FIRST PERFORMANCE

After these general introductory remarks our first task will be to consider more closely the legendary story as related in chapter I of the Nāṭyaśāstra. It runs as follows: At the request of the gods, Brahmā composes the Nāṭyaveda as a fifth Veda, which contains the quintessence of all four Vedas and is open to all social classes. He then asks Indra to give, with the gods, a performance of the legend (*itihāsa*) he has composed (1.19–23) but Indra refuses because the gods are, according to him, incapable (*aśakta*) and unfit (*ayogya*) to learn and perform a drama. Indra says that this is rather a task for the "wise men who know the secrets of the Veda" (*vedaguhyajñā munayaḥ*). Brahmā then orders Bharata to rehearse the drama with his hundred sons to the accompaniment of song and instrumental music (1.24ff.). The implication of this part of the story is obviously that in the *nāṭya* human beings enact rôles which were designed for gods: the drama is a "divine comedy", in the sense that cosmic events are presented on a human scale.

When Bharata informs Brahmā that the rôles have been studied and asks for further instructions, Brahmā says: "'Just now an important moment has arrived for the performance. The auspicious banner festival of the great Indra has just begun. On this occasion now perform this Veda which is called Drama!' Then, at that banner festival (celebrated) on the occasion of the slaying of the Asuras and Dānavas, at that festival of the victory of the great Indra, where the gods were assembled in joy, I first uttered a Benediction (*nāndī*) with blessings, which was full of variation as it consisted of words of the eight categories and which were approved of by the gods. Thereafter I arranged an imitation of how the Daityas were defeated by the gods, which was full of altercation, tumult, mutual cutting off and piercing (of limbs)" [82].

From these lines there emerges a picture which, although it is a projection of actual practices backwards into a primordial time, still bears testimony to the preservation of recollections of earlier stages of the Sanskrit drama. To begin with, this first performance was a re-enactment of the cosmogonical strife between Indra and the Asuras, and by repeating the defeat of this group the "creation" of the world was again actualized.

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[81] Konow, p. 8.
[82] See n. 145.

This performance was *baddha*, which must mean "arranged", since "composed" or "devised" (Ghosh) would seem out of the question here (see n. 144). If so, however, the question as to what exactly had been rehearsed by Bharata remains unanswered. It seems that the author of these lines was primarily thinking of the art of acting, rather than of memorizing a text. Anyway, the presentation of the cosmogonical event can only have been meant as a reiteration of the act of creation, that is, as a renovation of the world. It was, accordingly, a religious act *par excellence*, a *drōmenon* in the proper sense of the word.

This first performance is here connected with a religious ceremony, Indra's banner festival, which is here represented as a celebration of Indra's victory over the Asuras. This is confirmed by some of the oldest texts which deal with this festival and trace the origin of its ritual back to a primordial fight between Indra and the Asuras. Thus Varāhamihira (c. 490–587 A.D.) in his Bṛhatsaṁhitā 43 (42).1–7 relates how the gods at one time, unable to conquer the Asuras, appealed to Brahmā, who then advised them to ask Viṣṇu for the *dhvaja*. When Viṣṇu gave this banner to the gods, Indra placed it *upon his chariot* and *with the help of the dhvaja* he defeated his foes[83]. The mythical situation is the same as in the Churning of the Ocean (Mhbh. I.16.28–31), where Brahmā stands above the parties but Viṣṇu, at Brahmā's request, gives the gods strength (although he says that he will give it to *all* who participate in the battle, an ambiguity which can hardly have been unintentional, see p. 105). A fairly similar version (stemming from the same source, Garga) occurs in the Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa II.154.1–17, where Indra after his victory worships the banner himself (v. 17).

On the basic meaning of the banner festival, which is in some texts represented "as a royal rite for the benefit of the king's welfare and superiority in war"[84] opinions differ[85]. The character of the "banner",

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[83] Cf. Abhinavagupta ad NŚ. 1.54: *dhvajamahasya viśeṣaṇadvāreṇa saṁbhavaṁ darśayati 'nihatāsuradānava' ityādinā* "By means of the attribute 'after the Asuras and Dānavas had been killed, etc.' he indicates the origin (occasion) of the Banner Festival". The importance of the detail in the version of the Bṛhatsaṁhitā that Indra places the banner upon his chariot seems never to have been noticed. Cf. 43.5 *taiḥ saṁstutaḥ sa devas tutoṣa Nārāyaṇo dadau caiṣām, dhvajam asurasuravadhūmukhakamalavanatuṣāratīkṣṇāṁśum* (6) *taṁ Viṣṇutejobhavam aṣṭacakre rathe sthitaṁ bhāsvati ratnacitre, dedīpyamānaṁ śaradī 'va sūryaṁ dhvajaṁ samāsādya mumoda Śakraḥ* (7) *sakiṅkiṇījālaparikṣṛtena srakchattraghaṇṭāpiṭakānvitena, samucchritenā 'mararāḍ dhvajena ninye vināśaṁ samare 'risainyam*. It has been argued elsewhere that the banners on the chariots were, indeed, representatives of the Indradhvaja (see IIJ. 11, p. 154ff., particularly p. 156, where this passage is quoted). Gonda, JAOS. 87 (1967) p. 416, quotes BhNŚ. 3.11ff. *(pūjā* to the *jarjara)* for the ritual aspects of the festival, but that passage only describes the function of the *jarjara*, whereas here the cosmogonical character of the festival is stated *expressis verbis*.

[84] Gonda, JAOS. 87 (1967), p. 414.

[85] See J. J. Meyer, Trilogie altindischer Mächte und Feste der Vegetation, Ein Beitrag zur vergleichenden Religions- und Kulturgeschichte, Fest- und Volkskunde (Zürich-Leipzig, 1937), III, where all the relevant texts are quoted in German

mostly a bamboo pole (*veṇumayī yaṣṭi* VarBS. 43.8) [86], as a representative of the *axis mundi* cannot, however, be questioned. Its association with Indra's cosmogonical act, for which evidence can be found in comparatively early texts [87], then admits of no other interpretation than that the erection of the pole was a ritual re-enactment of Indra's "propping up" the sky by means of the cosmic pillar (see IIJ. 11, p. 156, 16, p. 248ff., and cf. p. 141). The banner festival was, consequently, a reiteration of the creation and must as such have inaugurated the new year, that is, a new life in a renovated world.

Two points of detail may here be stressed. First, several texts, both of earlier and more recent times, confirm that the banner festival was organized by the kings [88]. Secondly, many passages mention "spectacles"

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translation. The only two texts which Meyer had dismissed as worthless (p. 55 n.), viz. the Kauśikasūtra and Atharvavedapariśiṣṭa, have since been carefully translated and commented upon by J. Gonda, JAOS. 87 (1967), pp. 413–429. For the archaeological evidence see Odette Viennot, Le culte de l'arbre dans l'Inde ancienne (Paris 1954), pp. 96–98. While in Meyer's opinion the Indra-tree is a solar and vegetation tree (p. 134), which brings good luck and prosperity in this world and in the next (p. 116), Gonda, p. 416, formulates his conclusion in these words: "it is not only a seasonal rite and a form of tree cult, but also assures the king's victoriousness and invincibility". This is no doubt correct as far as it goes. It should only be observed that the hypothetical meaning of the world pillar, which may be inferred from its cosmogonical origin, viz. a symbol of life and guarantee of the cosmic order, may be formulated in very different ways according to the specific context in which it occurs. It is not advisable, therefore, to attach too much importance to a single passage. Thus Mhbh. I.57.17 has *iṣṭapradānam uddiśya śiṣṭānāṁ paripālinīm*, which I translate "for the fulfilling of desires [as a *kalpataru*] and protective of the learned men" (otherwise Meyer, p. 4: "indem er sie als erwünschte Liebesgabe bezeichnete"). The Harivaṁśa 59.6, however, says *(meghāḥ) sasyaṁ janayanti navāmbubhiḥ* "(the clouds) cause the corn to grow by fresh rains", which reflects the main concern of an agricultural community. This has a striking parallel in the *medhi* which according to the (apparently late) Kṛṣiparāśara was erected in the field to ensure the growing of the corn (*sasyavṛddhikara*, see IIJ. 11, pp. 156, 214f.). This belief may have been as authentic as the kings' belief that the pole brought them victoriousness. Cf. Bṛhatsaṁhitā 43.11, where the *pūjā* to the Indradhvaja is performed *narendrair balavṛddhijayārthibhiḥ* and, somewhat parallel to it, the *pūjā* to the *jarjara*, NŚ. 3.13: *nṛpasya vijayaṁ śaṁsa ripūṇāṁ ca parājayam, gobrāhmaṇaśivaṁ caiva nāṭyasya ca vivardhanam*, which is instructive for the variety of intentions. Gonda, p. 418, discusses the possibility that the "emphasis laid on victoriousness" may be of later date. The different character of the various literary sources may to a large extent have determined the different emphasis. In conclusion it may be observed that the character of the Indradhvaja, connected as it was with a very definite cosmogonical myth, was so specific that by subsuming it under the general heading of "tree worship" one runs the risk of missing the point. It was not the tree as such but the renewing of the world which it symbolized that stood central (see Odette Viennot, Le culte de l'arbre dans l'Inde ancienne, pp. 93–98). See also n. 123.

[86] See Meyer, p. 18.

[87] Viṣṇudharmottarap. II.154.17: *tato labdhajayaḥ Śakraḥ pūjayām āsa taṁ dhvajam.* For a translation of the whole passage see Meyer, p. 6ff.

[88] Cf. Kauś. Sūtra 140.1 and, e.g., Mhbh. I.57.19 *tataḥ prabhṛti cā 'dyā 'pi yaṣṭyāḥ kṣitipasattamaiḥ, praveśaḥ kriyate . . .*, Harivaṁśa 59.18 *tasmāt prāvṛṣi rājānaḥ sarve Śakraṁ mudā yutāḥ, mahaiḥ sureśam arcanti . . .*

(*prekṣāḥ, prekṣaṇīyāni*) performed during the festival[89] but, as Meyer observes, this refers to performances by dancers, wrestlers (*malla*) and jugglers. These festivities for the ordinary people clearly did not include dramatical performances and must, therefore, be kept distinct from the latter: they were limited to such popular amusement of the town's people as could take place in the streets[90]. In all discussions of the origin of the Indian drama, as far as I can see, the essential fact has constantly been overlooked that the characteristic difference between the drama and all popular amusements is that the former had to be performed in a *consecrated building*.

About the time of the year when this festival was celebrated the texts have very divergent statements but Hopkins's conclusion still holds good: "it is at least clear that the festival occurred after the rains had ceased and when New Year's was celebrated, for in its installation it is especially said that the feast takes place at the end of the year (*gate saṁvatsare*)" [91]. According to the Prakrit description quoted in n. 90 the festival apparently lasted eight days, the last one being the full moon, when the king himself worshipped the tree. The next day the tree was

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[89] Cf. Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa II.155.17 *sthāne sthāne deyā prekṣyā* (read *prekṣā*, Meyer) . . . *pūjayen nṛtyagītena rātrau Śakraṁ narādhipaḥ* (21) *nityaṁ nṛtyena gītena tathā Śakraṁ ca pūjayet*, Bhaviṣyottarapurāṇa 139.25 *prekṣaṇīyaiḥ* (Meyer, p. 38). Meyer (p. 10 n. 4) does not attach much importance to this detail because performances are mentioned with reference to every festival. As for the reading *nṛtya-*, the distinction made by M. Krishnamachariar, History of Classical Sanskrit Literature (Delhi, etc. 1937/1970), viz. "The *Nritya* is gesticulation without language, or pantomime; and the *Nritta* is simple dancing" is, it seems, of later date. It is based upon Daśar. 1.12–13. In Vedic texts the nouns corresponding to JB. II.69 *yad vīṇāyāṁ gīyate, yan nṛtyate* "what is sung to the accompaniment of the lute, what is danced" are *gīta* and *nṛtta*, cf. VS. 30.6 (VSK. 34.6) *gītāya śailūṣám* : TB. III.4.2.1 *nṛttāya śailūṣám* and VS. ibid. *nṛttāya sūtám*, ŚB. III.2.4.6 *(yā . . .) nṛttáṁ gītám upāvavárta*, KB. XXIX.5.16 *nṛttaṁ gītaṁ vāditam iti* (v. l. *nṛtyam* only in the printed editions of Lindner and Poona). The Nāṭyaśāstra seems still to continue the Vedic usage, e.g. 5.163C (158B) *nṛttagītavidhiṁ prati*, v. l. *gītanṛttavidhiṁ p.*), 164 *gīte vādye ca nṛtte ca*, 22.47 *C. bahunṛttagītā*, and cf. 5.12, 93, 131, 148, 159C, but Mhbh. XIII.109.36 has *(a)psarasāṁ nṛtyagītavinādite*, only the South Indian manuscripts reading *nṛtta-*. See n. 107.

[90] Cf. the Prakrit story of Domuha (Jacobi, Ausgewählte Erzählungen in Mâhârâshṭrî, p. 40,18): *tao naccanti naṭṭiyāo, gijjanti sukairaiyā kavvabandhā, naccanti narasaṁghāyā, dīsanti diṭṭhimohaṇāiṁ indayālāiṁ, indayāliṇo ya dijjanti tambolāiṁ, khippanti kappūrakuṅkumajalachaḍā, dijjanti mahādāṇāiṁ, vajjanti muiṅgāiāojjāiṁ* (drums and instruments). *evaṁ mahāmoeṇa gayā satta vāsarā* "Then the nautch girls danced, poetic compositions written by good poets were sung, the multitude of men danced, juggler's tricks that bewildered the eyes were seen, and betel and other things were given to the juggler; a great deal of camphor, saffron, and water was thrown, great gifts were given, drums and other instruments were sounded. Thus seven days passed in great joy". (Translation by J. J. Meyer, Hindu Tales, p. 143). Cf. also the southern recension of the Mahābhārata I.57.507*, line 5ff. *sabhājayitvā rājānaṁ kṛtvā narmāśritāḥ kathāḥ, ramante nāgarāḥ sarve tathā jānapadaiḥ saha, sūtāś ca māgadhāś caiva naṭante naṭanartakaiḥ*, etc., Var. Bṛhatsaṁhitā 43, 9–10. For similar festivals *(stūpamaha)* when a stūpa was erected see Avadānaśataka I, p. 385,7.

[91] See Hopkins, Epic Mythology, p. 126. See below, p. 133.

pulled down and despoiled by the people. It can be inferred that the pole was not allowed to remain standing during the waning moon [92]. The main reason, however, why the tree had to be removed will be discussed below. In spite of his correct statement that the tree was erected at the end of the year Hopkins finally explained the date of the festival from the fact that it coincided with the period of warfare [93]. There are, however, no indications to show that this can have determined the date of the Indra-festival [94].

The oldest text, the Kauśikasūtra 140.2, gives as the exact date of the "entrance" of the tree into the town the eighth day of the light fortnight in the month Prauṣṭhapada (now: August-September) or Aśvayuja (now: September-October) [95]. Although in later times the former of these two dates was considered to be characteristic of the Sāmavedins [96], it is here found in a work of Atharvavedins. The same date is given by Garga, the source of the relevant passages of the Bṛhatsaṁhitā and the Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa (Meyer III, p. 17). The passage which is of particular interest has been handed down in the commentary on VarBS. 42 (43).7: "Garga has it as follows: 'When the Asuras saw the *dhvaja*, they lost, dispelled by the power (*tejas*) of the *dhvaja*, consciousness and, defeated in the battle, they ran away and disappeared (or, perished). After the thousand-eyed god had slain the Asuras with his *vajra* (see below, p. 142) in the month Bhādrapada (*māse Bhādrapade*) ... the victorious one [read *sajitvā*? Cf. RS. III.12.4] went on his way to heaven, under Śravaṇa, accompanied by the twice-born' ". The last words might be interpreted as referring to the end of the seasonal worship of Indra but according to most sources it is the erection of the pole, not its pulling down, that takes place "under Śravaṇa" (Kauś.S. 140.3, see Meyer III, p. 113f., Gonda pp. 418 and 420). Later texts give somewhat earlier or later dates, ranging from June-July to November-December [97].

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[92] Similarly Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa II.154. See J. J. Meyer, p. 113.

[93] Hopkins, p. 125f.: "Indra's day comes when the rains are over and the roads are fit for war, and is the new moon's day of Saumya *māsa* (probably the end of September: *amāvāsyā Śakradevatā* 5,142,18)", but he thinks it is impossible to identify this "Indra's day" with the festival. Similarly Gonda, JAOS. 87 (1967), p. 420, who, however, rightly opposes the last statement; see p. 417 n. 25.

[94] Although the end of the rains is traditionally known as the season for military expeditions, the months most suited for warfare are according to Mhbh. XII.101.9f. Mārgaśīrṣa and Caitra, accordingly January–February (or December–January, see n. 112) and March–April (or February–March): *caitryāṁ vā mārgaśīrṣyāṁ vā senāyogaḥ praśasyate, pakvasasyā hi pṛthivī bhavaty ambumatī tathā.* (10) *naivā 'tiśīto nā 'tyuṣṇaḥ kālo bhavati Bhārata.*

[95] See Gonda, p. 420.

[96] See Auguste Barth, Oeuvres 4, p. 175 (quoting Jacobi), Rām. IV.27.10 Gorresio (21.10 N.W. recension) = IV.27.34 crit. ed.

[97] See Meyer, p. 113ff., especially p. 117f., Gonda, p. 420, Bhat, The Vidūṣaka p. 33, M. M. Ghosh, Nāṭyaśāstra, Translation p. 9 n. 1 (ad 1.53). According to Keith, Sanskrit Drama, p. 41, the Indra-pole was originally the Maypole, erected at the end of the winter. In India, however, he thinks there has been a shift, the pole having lost its original character and symbolizing "a thanksgiving for Indra's victory

This is sufficient proof to show that the festival was not originally connected with either the culmination of the sun ("Johannisfest")[98] or war-fare.

On the other hand, there is one passage in the Mahābhārata where (as Hopkins has pointed out) the actual meaning of the ceremony is stated in unambiguous terms. In the story of the Cedi King Vasu, to whom Indra had given the bamboo pole (*yaṣṭi vaiṇavī*) and who was the first man to celebrate the pole festival, it is said: "In order to worship Śakra on earth the protector of the earth (the king) ordered the pole to be brought into the town *when the year was gone*"[99]. In explanation of this statement the commentator Nīlakaṇṭha adds the following note: "Nowadays one can still see the 'entrance' of the pole in Mahārāṣṭra and other countries at the end of the year"[100]. Since he here clearly refers to a custom that he knew from personal experience (that is, about 1675 A.D.) and since the words *gate saṁvatsare* of the Mahābhārata cannot possibly mean anything else but "at the end of the year" the doubts expressed by Meyer[101] are unfounded.

It is a well-known fact that Indian sources mention different dates for New Year's day[102]. As has long been observed, a radical change took place

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over the clouds, the Asuras". This mythological reconstruction will have to be restated: although it is indeed likely that the Indra-pole has always symbolized the beginning of a new year, the date of New Year's day must have shifted considerably after the oldest Vedic period.

[98] Meyer, p. 118.

[99] Mhbh. I.57.18 *tasyāḥ Śakrasya pūjārthaṁ bhūmau bhūmipatis tadā, praveśaṁ kārayām āsa gate saṁvatsare tadā.*

[100] Nīlakaṇṭha: *saṁvatsarānte yaṣṭipraveśo 'dyāpi Mahārāṣṭrādiṣu dṛśyate.*

[101] See Meyer, Trilogie III, p. 4 n. 2. Meyer refers to Bhaviṣyottarapurāṇa 139.7, where it is said that Vasu brought the pole *(yaṣṭi)* from heaven to earth during the rains, whereas verse 9 says that in later times people imitated him in worshipping the pole *varṣānte*. Here a translation "innerhalb der Regenzeit", which Meyer (pp. 36, 114) diffidently suggests, is plainly out of the question. Cf., e.g. Tamil *varuṣāntam* "close of the year". Similarly the commentator on Viṣṇupurāṇa V.10.24 *prāvṛṣi*: "at the end of the rains" (see n. 115).

[102] Cf., e.g., Weber, Jyotiṣam, pp. 27 (partly the winter solstice), 78, Oldenberg, Kleine Schriften pp. 28, 647 (spring as the first month), 663, Hillebrandt, Romanische Forschungen 5 (1889–90), p. 310ff., Rituallitteratur p. 115, Vedische Mythologie I², p. 33, II², pp. 182, 137, Macdonell-Keith, Vedic Index II, pp. 157, 412f., J. Hertel, Das indogermanische Neujahrsopfer im Veda (1938), passim, J. Filliozat, L'Inde Classique II, p. 724, C. d'Onofrio, Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni 24/25 (1953–54), p. 141f. (with ample references), Claus Vogel, ZDMG. 121 (1970[1971]), pp. 284–326, and the references given in IIJ. 4, p. 219 n. 7. According to the Jaim.Up.Br. I.35.5ff. the year ended with *hemanta* and began with *vasanta*, which constituted the two "ends" of the year. With the first *(hemantá)* the three seasons of the Manes ended and with *vasantá* began the three seasons of the gods (ŚB. II.1.3.1). [For similar speculations about the two Phalgunīs and the two *atirātras* being the end and the beginning see A. Barth, Oeuvres 4, p. 174f. and, e.g., TS. VII.5.1.3, ŚB. VI.2.2.18]. The rainy season and the autumn are in the middle of the year (ŚB. VIII.3.2.7–8), which is not contradicted by RS. VII.103.9 (as Jacobi suggested): see, e.g., Oldenberg, Kl. Schr. p. 659f. According to Benveniste, Mnemes Charin I, p. 34, the word *hāyaná* "year" shows that the year began with

in the post-Vedic period, as a result of which the month Mārgaśīrṣa (now: mid-November to mid-December), in older times the tenth month of the calendar, became the first[103]. It is not necessary for the purpose of this study to inquire further into the historical background of this change. Even though it may be true that certain Vedic sacrifices began after the rainy period[104], the fundamental change in the calendar of "L'Inde des moussons" seems to have taken place in post-Vedic times. In the Mahābhārata Mārgaśīrṣa is clearly the first of the months[105]. In

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the winter *(*hayan :* Av. *zayan)*. This might be compared with Goth. *twalibwintrus* "twelve-years-old" (and Latin *bīmus, trīmus*, Cl. Vogel, p. 284) but the Rigvedic poets use *śatáṁ śarádaḥ* just as much as *śatáṁ hímāḥ*. Cf. *bahvíḥ sámāḥ* and ŚB. XII.8.2.35 "All the seasons are first, all of them intermediate, and all of them last". Anyway, after a system of six seasons had been formed by splitting up *hemantá* into *hemantá* and *śiśirá* (Claus Vogel, p. 286), the winter ended with *śiśirá*, and New Year's day (*ekāṣṭakā*, AS.III.10, TS. IV.3.11.3, etc.) fell on the eighth day of the second half of Māgha, that is, January–February or formerly December–January (*māghakṛṣṇāṣṭamī*, Sāyaṇa ad AS. III.10.12 and introduction to that hymn). See Hillebrandt, Rituallitteratur, p. 94ff., Ved. Myth. I², p. 30, Caland, note on translation of PB. V.9.1, Keith, note on transl. of TS. VII.4.8.1 (p. 607 n. 3), Vedic Index I, p. 119, II, p. 157. This is, accordingly, round about the winter solstice, which fell on the new moon of Māgha (KB. XIX.1.28 *māghasyā 'māvāsyāyām*). According to Caland New Year's day was ("as it seems") a week after Ekāṣṭakā. But from MS. II.5.9 (59,3), IV.2.3 (25,4), KS. XIII.3 (182,15), AS. III.10.2 and 8, etc. it is apparent that it was New Year's night. In different calendars, again, the new year began in the month of Phālguna, i.e. February–March (cf., e.g., the commentary on PB. V.9.8 *etad uktaṁ bhavati : yadā phālgunīpaurṇamāsy uttara-phālgunīyuktā tadā phālgunamāsaḥ saṁvatsarasyā 'dir bhavatī 'ti*) or in Caitra, i.e. March–April. Cf. ĀpŚS. XXI.15.4–6, Keith's note on his translation of TS. VII.4.8.1–2, Heesterman, The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration p. 7f. and further Oldenberg, Kleine Schriften, pp. 647f., 663ff. (from 1894–95), C. d'Onofrio, l.c. (either the 8th or the 9th day of *śuklapakṣa* of Phālguna, or full moon of Caitra, or 8th or 9th day of *śuklapakṣa* of Jyaiṣṭha or Āṣāḍha; or generally in the period between spring and summer, cf. ŚB. XIII.4.1.2–3 (according to some one should begin the Aśvamedha in summer, for summer is the *kṣatriya's* season, but it is strongly advised to begin it in spring, which is the brāhmaṇa's season).

[103] PW. V (1868), col. 745: "der zehnte (später der erste) Monat im Jahre". But now Mārgśīrṣ is the ninth month of the Hindu year, the first being Cait (Caitra), i.e. March–April. The Fasli year, however, commences with the month of Āsin (see Grierson, Bihar Peasant Life, p. 274), that is, in September–October. Similarly the Tamil-Malayalam year begins on the first day of the month of *Cittirai* (*Mēdam*) (10–14 April). Divination, however, here takes place at the time of the winter solstice during *poṅkal*, which marks the first day of the month of *Tai* (January) as the beginning of a new period. The festival on the preceding day *(pōki(p)paṇṭikai)* is celebrated in honour of Indra ([L. Dupuis et L. Mousset], Dictionnaire tamoul-français s.v. *poṅkal*), who is here, accordingly, associated with the winter solstice. The Cola kings, on the other hand, celebrated the *Intiraviḻavu* festival in the month of *Cittirai*.

[104] The *cāturmāsya* offerings started in autumn, in winter or at the beginning of the rainy season. See Jacobi, Festgruss f. Roth, p. 71, Hillebrandt, Rituallitteratur, p. 115f.

[105] Mhbh. XIII.109.17–19 (the twelve months from Mārgaśīrṣa to Kārttika), Appendix I, 12 line 5 (in a list of *upavāsas*; it starts with *dvādaśyāṁ Mārgaśīrṣe tu*), 12A line 5 (an enumeration of the months starting with Mārgaśīrṣa). Cf. Bhagavadgītā 10.35 *māsānāṁ mārgaśīrṣo 'ham ṛtūnāṁ kusumākaraḥ*.

this later calendar the main caesura in the annual cycle is the period of the rains (about mid-June to mid-September), which coincides with Viṣṇu's sleep. Viṣṇu's awakening on the eleventh day of the light half of Kārttika (26 October)[106] inaugurates a new beginning and is celebrated accordingly[107]. The circumstance that Kārttika, the last month of the year, became the specific time for dicing may also reflect this change in the calendar. At least, Held's observations[108], if correct, would lead to the supposition that the time for dicing must originally have been what he calls "the period of the great tribal feasts". In terms of Vedic social life this would mean: in the period of the contests round about New Year's day. In any case, there can be no doubt that the rainy season, was a most inauspicious time, surrounded by taboos[109].

As such it was, as far as its character is concerned, comparable to the Vedic annual period of *áṁhas*. This must have been at the end of the year and must have formed the transition to the new year, as may be inferred from the fact that the thirteenth (intercalary) month was called "lord of the *áṁhas*"[110]. Just as the Vedic period of cosmic chaos was followed by New Year's day, so the rainy period of classical India formed – at least, in some of the later calendar systems – the transition from the old to the new year. Diwali, which is celebrated on the day of the new moon of Kārttika[111], is nowadays often regarded as a New Year's festival.

That the rainy season, as the main caesura in the annual cycle, has come to determine the beginning of the new year is, therefore, probable. The month Mārgaśīrṣa, it is true, does not coincide with the end of the rainy season since nowadays it corresponds with mid-November to mid-December. At the time of the Saurasiddhānta (± 350 A.D.), however, which can in this respect be considered contemporaneous with the Mahābhārata, the same month must have corresponded with October-November[112].

When the dates of the various parts of India are taken into account, the rainy season lasts from mid-June to mid-October and comprises,

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[106] Thus Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. I², p. 361.

[107] Cf. J. J. Meyer, Trilogie III, pp. 10, 34 *(jāgaraṇa)*, 20, 39 *(jāgara)*, and, e.g., *Skāndapurāṇa* VII.4.24.35 *nṛtyaṁ gītaṁ ca kartavyaṁ saṁprāpte jāgare tava.*

[108] See G. J. Held, The Mahābhārata, p. 243ff., especially p. 277.

[109] See, e.g., the references in Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 447, Held, The Mahabharata, pp. 190, 185, 197 (not entirely correct in detail, for the rainy season was certainly not the time of war). The taboo on travelling in the rainy season was not restricted to Buddhists but also valid for Brahmins, cf., e.g., VaikhDhS. III.7.8.

[110] See VS. VII.30, XXII,31, VSK. VII.12.1, XXIV.18.1 *aṁhasaspatáye*, MS. III.12.13 (164,7), TS. I.4.14.1, VI.5.3.4, ĀpŚS. VIII.20.8 *aṁhaspatyáya* (=*saṁsarpa*, Ved. Index II, p. 162).

[111] On the day of the new moon (*amāvāsyā*) of Kārttika, that is, on the fifteenth day of the dark half of that month. See, e.g., Platts, A Dictionary, Hindūstānī and English, Meyer, Trilogie II, p. 90 n. 1 and passim, Hopkins, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics 5, pp. 868, 870.

[112] According to J. Filliozat, L'Inde Classique II, p. 723.

accordingly, the months Āṣāḍha, Śrāvaṇa, Bhādra (or Prauṣṭhapada) and Āśvina (or Aśvayuja)[113]. The same months are according to J. J. Meyer (p. 117) mentioned in the texts as those in which the Indra-pole is erected. This would imply that the last and the first months of the calendar are not mentioned at all. In the beginning of his study (p. 5), however, Meyer had rightly pointed out that two editions of the southern recension of the Mahābhārata state that the Indradhvaja was erected in Mārgaśīrṣa, the first month of the year. The Telugu and Grantha manuscripts collated for the critical edition read, indeed, instead of the pāda I.57.18d (*praveśaṁ kārayām āsa*) *gate saṁvatsare tadā*, the two pādas (502*) *sarvotsavavaraṁ tadā Mārgaśīrṣe mahārāja*. The two manuscripts in Malayalam script, on the other hand, add after v. 18 the line (503*) *Mārgaśīrṣe mahārāja paurṇamāsyāṁ mahāmaham*. The erecting of the Indra-pole in Mārgaśīrṣa was apparently a regional custom, which was restricted to South India. In modern Kerala (as Dr. A. Govindankutty informs me), every third year in Kumbham (=Phālguna, March-April) members of low castes bring a bamboo pole into the town, where it is erected in front of the temple of Bhagavatī and adorned with garlands, etc. After some weeks, but before New Year's day (14 april) the pole is removed. There are no doubt numerous parallels in Northern India. One of them is found in the Kṛṣiparāśara, a late text on agriculture, in which it is said that in the month Mārga (vv. 214, 219) a pole (*medhi*, vv. 214–220), adorned with flags (*vaijayantīsamāyukta*, v. 217), is erected in the fields to protect the crops (see IIJ. 11, p. 214ff.).

It is clear, however, that older texts, such as the Kauśika Sūtra, give much earlier dates for the Indra festival and that it is not self-evident that our conclusion, based upon the words *gate saṁvatsare* of the Mahābhārata, also holds good for these texts. According to the Sūtra the festival was celebrated in one of the two months preceding the last month of the year of the later calendar. These months, Prauṣṭhapada and Aśvayuja, now correspond to August-September and September-October of our calendar, but must have corresponded to July-August and August-September about the beginning of our era. In this case it cannot be questioned that the festival was celebrated *during* the rainy season, whether or not this coincided with the new year. The term *prāvṛṣi* "during the rains" remained traditional in later texts, although there are indications to show that actually the date had changed[114]. Thus the commentator of the Viṣṇupurāṇa interprets *prāvṛṣi* as meaning "at the end of the rains"[115]. This curious explanation, which obviously reflects a shift of the date, is confirmed by the Harivaṁśa, which itself specifies the term *prāvṛṣi* by "in the autumn . . . at the end of the rainy season"

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[113] See Petersburger Wörterbuch and Monier-Williams s.v. *prāvṛṣ*.

[114] Viṣṇupurāṇa V.10.24 and Harivaṁśa 59.18 crit. ed. (*prāvṛṣi*).

[115] Similarly, e.g., Odette Viennot, Le culte de l'arbre dans l'Inde ancienne, p. 95. See also above n. 101 (*varṣānte*) and n. 100 (*saṁvatsarānte*).

and says that the pole is adorned with "autumnal flowers" [116]. It would seem, accordingly, that *prāvṛṣi*, a remnant of older times, had come to be used as a rough indication for that period, at the end of, or after, the rainy season, which, marked by such festivals as Diwali and Viṣṇu's *jāgara* and extending to Mārgaśīrṣa, had in later calendar systems become the beginning of the new year. It may be noted incidentally that in Vedic India as well as in Tibet, the New Year's festival was celebrated by contests and especially by chariot-races [117]. See also above, p. 126. In modern India chariot-racing is also reported to occur on the occasion of the erection of a certain pole [118].

A few words must also be said about the conclusions which J. J. Meyer has drawn from his careful and important study of the evidence of the Sanskrit sources. His view that the banner festival celebrated the culmination of the sun and that the Indra-pole corresponds to the Johannisbaum in Germany has already been briefly mentioned above (p. 133). This theory was strongly influenced by Hillebrandt's interpretation of Indra as a solar deity, which Meyer had accepted as "one of the few certain results of Vedic research" [119]. There is some contradiction in his interpretation since, on the other hand, he thinks that none of the Vedic poets was still aware of this character of Indra [120]. That Meyer must assume considerable shifts in the date of the festival, from the summer solstice to the period of the rains [121], is clear. The main objection, however, that must be raised to his theory is that, while Hillebrandt disregarded the cosmogonical character of the Vṛtra-myth, a correct appreciation of that character necessarily implies that Indra was a seasonal god connected with the ceremonies that accompanied the transition from the old to the new year. In this light the importance of the classical testimonies to the effect that, whatever the calendar date of New Year's day may have been, Indra's festival was to be celebrated at the end of the year, should not be underestimated. Meyer ignored their vital importance or tried to explain them away. In this connection also Keith's explanation must be mentioned. In his opinion the drama was "once connected with

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[116] Harivaṁśa 59.18 *tasmāt prāvṛṣi rājānaḥ* etc. (see n. 88) but 31 *śarat* (cf. 47, 50, 55 referring to war), 57 *śaradi . . . prāvṛṣaḥ kṣaye*, 58 *puṣpaiḥ śāradikaiḥ*. As for 62.46 *varṣārdhe ca dhvajo nityam* see Meyer III, p. 132.

[117] See IIJ. 4, p. 217ff., 5, p. 169ff.

[118] See Meyer, Trilogie III, p. 134 on "Wettrennen und Wettspiele" in connection with the erection of the pole of Zāhīr-Pir.

[119] Trilogie III, p. 134: . . . zu den wenigen ganz festen Erkenntnissen vedischer Forschung . . . gehört meines Erachtens die Entdeckung Hillebrandts, dass Indra ursprünglich ein Sonnengott sei", p. 135 "dass Indra ein Sonnen-, ein Frühlingsgott ist", p. 118 "was seit Hillebrandt für jedermann feststehen müsste". Hence his conclusion (p. 118): "Der Indrabaum wäre also genauer ein Johannisbaum" and further p. 191, where Indra is said to have been "ursprünglich ein Sonnen- und Frühlingsgott und ein Befruchtungsgenius". The word "ursprünglich" here seems to point to a certain reservation that is lacking in the other passages.

[120] See p. 150 n. 1, which would seem to contradict p. 135.

[121] See pp. 117f., 192.

the ceremonies of bringing in the Maypole from the woods at the close of the winter, but in India the rite fell at the close of the rainy season, and the ceremony was converted into a festival of thanksgiving for Indra's victory over the clouds, the Asuras"[122]. There is no reason to doubt that in the old Aryan tradition Indra has always been the god who conquered the Asuras, and that the festival has always been a symbolical reiteration of that cosmogonical event[123]. As such it must originally have been celebrated during the winter solstice or the spring equinoctial, before the beginning of the new year had been shifted and the tenth month had become the first (see nn. 102 and 103).

In conclusion a few words must be said about the relation of the god to his pole (*yaṣṭi*) or banner (*dhvaja*). This relation is more problematic than might seem at first sight. The tree or bamboo pole is, first and foremost, considered a symbol (*cihna*, *lakṣman*) of the god. During the ceremony of the *pūraṇa* (also called *prapūraṇa*, *āvahana*, *adhivāsana*)[124], however, the god was called upon to be personally present in his symbol. Hence it is that the texts often refer to the tree as the god himself[125], a belief that is still found as late as *circa* 1000 A.D. in Abhinavagupta's commentary on the Nāṭyaśāstra[126]. Although the identification of the god and his symbol is, accordingly, an established fact[127], the question of to what extent the Indra-pole was identical with the cosmic tree (*axis mundi*) calls for some comment. The world pillar which keeps heaven

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[122] See Sanskrit Drama, p. 41.

[123] Otherwise Gonda, JAOS. 87 (1967), p. 418: ". . . it is not beyond possibility that Indra's relation to the pole-festival is not 'original', that Indra and—especially among the higher classes—with him also the emphasis laid on victoriousness etc. were associated with it at a comparatively recent date". As has been pointed out above (n. 85) the position taken in the present study is different in that the interpretation here given of the festival implies that quite different meanings could be attached to the festival according to the social situation. The emphasis which certain texts lay on victoriousness is easily explainable from the fact that the pole was erected by the king and that his personal interest naturally centred around victory in warfare. For the rest, the interpretation of the festival from an Aryan myth does not exclude that other, apparently parallel, forms of "tree-worship", such as that of the *medhi* referred to in n. 85 may have been rooted in *historically* different religious traditions, even without an explicit *interpretatio Arica*. Even as far as Indra's banner festival is concerned, it seems that the authors were no longer aware of any connection with the Vedic Creation myth. At that date the distinction between Aryan and non-Aryan, if it can then be made at all, is only of historical interest.

[124] See Meyer III, p. 23 n. 3 and Gonda, p. 421.

[125] See Meyer III, pp. 13, 46, 52 n. 2, 101, 117, 131 n. 1, 134.

[126] In his commentary (1. 54) on *dhvajamahaḥ . . . mahendrasya* (see n. 83) he writes: *dhvajasye 'ndrasya mahanaṁ pūjanaṁ yatra sa dhvajamahaḥ. dhvajamahasya viśeṣaṇadvāreṇa sambhavaṁ darśayati "nihatāsuradānava" ityādinā*, "The Dhvajamaha (occurs) where there is a *mahana* (worshipping) of the *dhvaja*, that is, Indra. In the words 'after having killed the Asuras and Dānavas' etc. (the author) indicates by means of an attribute the origin (occasion) of the Banner Festival". Here *Indrasya* can only be meant as an explanation of *dhvajasya*.

[127] See IIJ. 11, p. 155, Gonda, JAOS. 87, p. 422.

and earth apart has risen in the beginning of the creation as the result of Indra's demiurgic act but is nevertheless *not* identical with the god. It is sufficient to point out that the world tree, which symbolizes the totality of the universe, is conceived as standing in the centre of the cosmos, whereas Indra is in the cosmic classification localized in the East (or South, when Agni occupies the place in the East). While this was the god's normal place in the system, the situation may have been different during the few days when the pole was erected and Indra was particularly prominent. The central point is Indra's character of a seasonal god, which has been inferred above [128] from his mythic role. As early as the Rigveda, indeed, Indra is not only said to place his sign (*ketu*) – which may be interpreted as referring to his world pillar – but he is also said to be himself that *ketu* [129]. Except during that short period round about New Year's day, however, the cosmic tree has little to do with Indra but all the more with the gods of totality, such as Viṣṇu [130], with whom in modern times the holy fig tree (*pīpal*) in the centre of the village is sometimes identified [131]. This situation may be illustrated by a reference to the *jarjara*, which on the Indian stage represented the cosmic tree like the *kekajon* or *gunungan* in the Javanese wayang. Although according to the Nāṭyaśāstra it is Indra who gave the *jarjara* to the actors as a token of his contentment (see p. 144) – a trait which might be an innovation of the author of this chapter [132] – the gods who reside in the five nodes of the bamboo pole do not comprise Indra, as they are Brahmā, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Skanda and "the great Nāgas Śeṣa, Vāsuki and Takṣaka" [133]. It has already been pointed out elsewhere [134] that Viṣṇu's position between the high gods of the upper world and the deities of the nether world [135]

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[128] See above, pp. 10, 30, 34, 42.

[129] See IIJ.11, p. 155f. on the use of *ketú* from the Rigveda onwards. It is still used for Indra's *dhvaja* in, e.g., Varāhamihira's Bṛhatsaṁhitā 43.2.

[130] See Indological Studies – William Norman Brown, p. 150, IIJ. 13, p. 283, Gonda, JAOS. 87, p. 417, Viṣṇuism and Śivaism, p. 6 and passim.

[131] For the identification of the Pīpal and Viṣṇu see Dubois-Beauchamp, Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies, 3rd ed., p. 652f.

[132] Cf. BhNŚ. 1.59 *prītas tu prathamaṁ Śakro dattavān svadhvajaṁ śubham*. In passages which deal with the banner festival it is Viṣṇu who gives the *dhvaja* to the gods, cf. Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa II.154.13 (cf. v. 17 where Indra worships it !), Varāhamihira's Bṛhatsaṁhitā 43.5 and Devīpurāṇa (Meyer III, p. 8). The difference is, of course, that in the cosmogonical strife Indra needed the help of Viṣṇu who, as a representative of the unity of the universe, guaranteed that the dichotomy of upper and nether world which Indra was about to create would nevertheless be comprised in an all-encompassing totality (see p. 102). In the Nāṭyaśāstra, however, Indra is the central god of the festival. Moreover the *jarjara*, although said to be the *dhvaja*, seems also to be a form of the *vajra*, which is Indra's weapon. See following note and n. 141.

[133] See BhNŚ. 1.92ff. *jarjare tu vinikṣiptaṁ vajraṁ daityanibarhaṇam, tatparvasu vinikṣiptāḥ surendrā hy amitaujasaḥ* (93) *śiraḥpārśve tato Brahmā dvitīye Śaṁkaras tathā, tṛtīye ca sthito Viṣṇus caturthe Skanda eva ca* (94) *pañcame ca mahānāgāḥ Śeṣavāsukitakṣakāḥ, evaṁ vighnavināśāya sthāpitā jarjare surāḥ.*

[134] See, e.g., IIJ. 13, p. 283.

[135] As for Skanda cf., e.g., his place in the *Vāstupuruṣa*, discussed by V. S. Agrawala,

is quite in line with his character as the connecting link between the two worlds, which is exemplified by the old Vedic simile of the arrow, the head of which is Agni, the shaft Soma, while Viṣṇu is the part by which the head is attached to the shaft [136].

The reason why Indra does not occur among the gods in the *jarjara* is that he does not belong to the centre. The interesting point is, however, that here a conflict between the seasonal function of the god and his usual place in the classification comes to light [137]. The festival must have been a re-enactment of the god's primeval act of lifting up the sky and separating heaven from earth by means of the world pillar (*skambhá*). It need not be stressed that this is a modern explanation based upon what we think we know at this moment of Vedic religion as a whole: none of the texts that have been handed down speak of the festival in these terms. The general view of their authors may be summarized as follows: it is traditionally performed for the good of the country and its king, it should, therefore, not be omitted and be done in the right way, or else disaster may threaten the king and the country. There is only a difference in degree with the modern villagers who erect their Maypole every spring in the centre of a Dutch village, by the side of the Roman-Catholic church, for no other reason than that it has been done so from times immemorial. The meaning which people attach to such a ceremony may, of course, have changed several times. On the other hand, whoever

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Matsyapurāṇa (Ramnagar, Varanasi, 1963), p. 347, viz. in the south-eastern corner, together with the witch Pūtanā. Skanda's localization in the cosmic centre requires a closer examination. For the place of the nāgas at the bottom of the world tree see Mhbh. V.101.2, VII.69.48 and IIJ. 8, p. 108, India Maior (Congratulatory Volume – J. Gonda), p. 151.

[136] See Indological Studies – William Norman Brown, p. 145 and cf. MS. III.8.1 (92,11) *Agníṁ śṛ́ṅgaṁ, Sómaṁ śalyáṁ, Viṣṇuṁ kúlmalam*, KS. XXV.1 (102,12), KKS. XXXVIII.4 (208,5-243,1) *Agniṁ śṛṅgaṁ, Somaṁ śalyaṁ, Viṣṇuṁ tejanam*, TS. VI.2.3.1 *tá iṣuṁ sám askurvatā 'gníṁ ánīkaṁ, Sómaṁ śalyáṁ, Viṣṇuṁ téjanam*, ŚB. III.4.4.14 *Agnim ánīkaṁ, Sómaṁ śalyáṁ, Viṣṇuṁ kúlmalam* (here transferred from the *iṣu* to the *vájra*, see Schlerath, Orbis 24 [1975], p. 508), Mhbh. VIII.24.84 *iṣuś cāpy abhavad Viṣṇur jvalanaḥ Soma eva ca, Agnīṣomau jagat kṛtsnaṁ vaiṣṇavaṁ co 'cyate jagat* (which refers to the belief that all things in the Universe are characterized by either an Agni or a Soma nature, but that the world as a whole is at the same time identical with Viṣṇu as the god of the all-embracing totality), VII.173.58 *śaraṁ kālāgnisaṁyuktaṁ Viṣṇusomasamāyutam*, 173.1457* *śalyam Agniṁ ca vai kṛtvā puṅkhe Somam apāṁ patim, sa kṛtvā dhanur oṁkāraṁ sāvitrīṁ jyāṁ Maheśvaraḥ* (cf. VII, App. 25.13 [=VII.202.77 Bombay ed.] *Viṣṇuṁ śarottamaṁ kṛtvā śalyam Agniṁ tathaiva ca, Vāyuṁ kṛtvā 'tha vājābhyāṁ puṅkhe Vaivasvataṁ Yamam*), VIII.24.257* (=34.18–19 Bombay ed.) *Viṣṇuṁ Somaṁ Hutāśaṁ ca tasye 'ṣuṁ samakalpayan, śṛṅgam Agnir babhūvā 'sya bhallaḥ Somo viśāṁ pate, kuḍmalaś cā 'bhavad Viṣṇus tasminn iṣuvare tadā* (the commentator Nīlakaṇṭha here quotes MS. as the *śruti*), XIII.145.27 *Viṣṇuṁ kṛtvā śarottamam, śalyam Agniṁ tathā kṛtvā puṅkhaṁ Vaivasvataṁ Yamam*. Against Whitney's translation of AS. IV.6.5 (and PW. VII, 109) see Zimmer, Altindisches Leben, p. 300: *śṛṅga* is the tip (=*ánīka*), *apāṣṭhá* the barb, *śalyá* the shaft, and *kúlmala* the "neck". Similarly Gonda, Early Viṣṇuism p. 35 n. 8.

[137] For the difference that may exist between a god's function and his place in the system of classification see IIJ. 13, p. 283.

wants to understand *the* meaning of a festival – thereby presupposing that it is possible, in that particular case, to find the original meaning – must come to the conclusion that what the villagers have to say about the meaning of their Maypole is of little help to him. The same is true of the, mostly post-Vedic, texts on which our information about the banner festival is based: either one restricts oneself to their explicit information and gives up every attempt at a real understanding of the underlying meaning of that festival, or one bases oneself on modern knowledge of the older religion and tries to interpret the facts accordingly. In the light of such an interpretation, then, it must be assumed that at the moment when Indra, standing in the centre of the Universe, separated heaven and earth, he was himself the *skambhá*. For the ambiguous relation between Indra and the world axis, cf. on the one hand RS. X.111.5 "the great sky he has propped with a pillar, the best supporter" and, on the other, AS. X.7.29–30, ASP. XVII.9.10, 10.1 "Skambha, I (we) clearly know thee to be contained entire in Indra" [or: I clearly know thee: all is set in Indra"], "Indra, I (we) clearly know thee to be contained entire in Skambha". The last words, taken from the well-known Skambha-hymn, can only refer to the banner festival, during which the world axis, in the shape of the Indra pole, could be considered an impersonation of Indra himself. It is clear, however, that the *Indradhvaja*, connected as it is with the re-enactment of a specific moment of Creation, is only a momentary *aspect* of the world tree. The banner festival celebrates the short moment when Indra coincided with the cosmic centre, but since he, as the protagonist of the Devas, stood for only one of the two moieties, the pole which was his symbol could not be allowed to stand any longer and was pulled down and thrown into the water at the end of the festival. There is a parallelism with the Christmas tree in Europe, and a contrast with the Maypole, which, at least in the Netherlands, is left standing the whole year in the centre of the village[138]. Indra's pole is associated with the inauspicious period of strife when the old year passed into the new year. In the new harmony after the close of that period there is no longer a place for that tree, which has to return to its origin, the primeval waters. Cf. AS. X.7.38,41 and the stanza VI.80.3, Paipp. XIX.16.13, which according to Atharvaveda Pariśiṣṭa XIX.1.10 should be addressed to Indra's banner in case a vulture or a black bird alights on it: "In the waters is thine origin, in heaven thy home, in the middle of the sea and upon the earth thy greatness" (Paipp. "in the sea thy soul (*ātmā*), on earth thy greatness")[139]. The cosmic tree is, indeed, considered to have risen from the primeval waters and to remain rooted in the

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[138] I refer particularly to the Maypole of Noorbeek (prov. Limburg, The Netherlands).

[139] *apsú te jánma divi te sadhástham samudré antár mahimá te pṛthivyâm*. See, e.g., Bloomfield, SBE. 42, p. 501 and Gonda, JAOS. 87, p. 425, who explains *apsú* as the heavenly waters, the mythical prototype of the Indradhvaja having been in heaven (?).

subterranean ocean, while its top reaches into heaven, illustrations of which can be found in India and in Java [140].

The *jarjara* will be discussed in greater detail in a following section. Here it may be stated that, although Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra uses the term *dhvaja* in connection with Indra's victory over the Asuras and Dānavas and his festival (*dhvajamaha*), it is apparently necessary to distinguish between the *dhvaja* of the Indra-festival and the *jarjara* on the stage. Only the former could impersonate Indra, whereas the *jarjara* could not. Although it is said to be the *dhvaja*, it actually has the function of his *vajra*, as it is the weapon with which Indra destroys (*jarjarīkaroti*, BhNŚ. 1.70,72) the demons. It is this double function of the *jarjara* that justifies its being denoted by a distinct term. This is particularly clear when Bharata's account is compared with the fragment of Garga's work quoted above (p. 132). In the latter the Asuras are depicted as fleeing, frightened and losing consciousness at the sight of the *dhvaja*, whereupon Indra kills them with his *vajra* [141]. In the Nāṭyaśāstra, on the other hand, it is not only said that the Vighnas, as soon as they see the *jarjara* (1.74 *dṛṣṭvaiva jarjaram*) will flee, but also that Vighnas and Asuras are torn to pieces (1.73 *jarjarīkṛtāḥ*) by the same weapon (cf. p. 151).

If the presence of Indra in the *dhvaja* at the banner festival is due to his character of a seasonal god, his absence from the *jarjara* certainly does not prove that Indra's importance was already on the wane. On the contrary, from the fact that in the first chapter of the Nāṭyaśāstra he is still the central god it may be inferred that the author of this chapter, as far as his theological views are concerned, still stood in between the Vedic and the post-Vedic world. This circumstance makes it possible for modern research to reconstruct the religious background against which the older parts of the Nāṭyaśāstra were written.

4. THE "FIRST" DRAMATIC PERFORMANCE (NŚ. 1.51–59)

From the preceding section it will be clear that the authors of the oldest handbook on Indian dramaturgy considered the drama as having originally been a ritual re-enactment of creation, consisting of an imitation of Indra's victory over the Asuras [142]. The tale of the first chapter is essentially a cult legend, which explains the dramatical performance as

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[140] See India Maior, p. 145 n. 2 (with references) and for the reconstruction of this aspect of Indian cosmology also IIJ. 8, pp. 108, 116.

[141] See the commentary on Var. Bṛhatsaṁhitā 43 (42). 7: *tathā ca Gargaḥ: Asurās taṁ dhvajaṁ dṛṣṭvā dhvajatejaḥsamāhatāḥ, visaṁjñās samare bhagnāḥ parābhūtāḥ pradudruvuḥ. tān vajreṇa sahasrākṣo māse Bhādrapade 'surān, ghātayitvā sajyeṣṭhāyām* (read *sa Jyeṣṭhāyām*) . . . Similarly Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa II.154.12 *dṛṣṭamātreṇa yeneha vidraviṣyanti Dānavāḥ*. See further Ch. I, notes 132 and 133 and below, p. 160.

[142] This is not at variance with the fact that the theory of the Nāṭyaśāstra also takes into account the nature of the later drama, whose goal and character are defined by such terms and phrases as, e.g., 4.270 *vinodakaraṇam* or 36.11C *lokasya caritaṁ nāṭyam*. See n. 75.

a *drōmenon*, whose origin can be traced back to primordial time and which, for that reason, seems to have been considered a mystery [143].

The technical question as to whether the mythical first drama in Bharata's presentation was a full-fledged drama or an introductory part [144] is not relevant to our purpose. The Nāṭyaśāstra only says that it consisted of fight, tumult and mutual cutting off of members. The whole passage (NŚ. 1.51–59C), which is instructive when viewed in its context, is here given in full in translation (see p. 128): "Thus, after having well studied, together with all my sons as well as Svāti and Nārada, this drama (*nāṭya*) which was based on Vedas and Vedāṅgas, I approached with folded hands the Lord of the worlds (Brahmā) with a view to a performance: 'We have completely learnt the drama. Tell me what I shall do'. When the Grandfather heard this word, he answered 'An important (lit. great) time for the performance has just now (*ayam*) arrived: this is the time of the auspicious (*śrīmat*) banner festival of the great Indra. On this occasion now perform this Veda which bears the name Nāṭya'. Thereupon at that banner festival, (celebrated because) the Asuras and Dānavas had been destroyed, at the celebration of great Indra's victory where the gods were assembled in joy, I first performed (*kṛ-*) the Benediction (*nāndī*) with blessings, which was full of variation as it consisted of words from the eight categories and was approved of by the gods. Thereafter I arranged an imitation of how the Daityas were defeated by the gods, which was full of altercation, tumult, mutual cutting off and piercing (of limbs). Then Brahmā and the (other) gods, who were pleased at the performance and glad, gave us all sorts of paraphernalia (*upakaraṇa*)" [145].

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[143] BhNŚ. 36.10C *tat sarvaṁ nikhilene 'daṁ nāṭyaṁ guhyaṁ nidarśaya*, 36.15C *pratyuvāca punar vākyaṁ guhyārthābhinayaṁ* (thus the MSS.) *prati* "He answered them again with respect to the dramatic presentation, whose meaning is secret" and the next lines, which read in KM[2] (36.11) *kathayāmi kathāṁ guhyāṁ yan māṁ pṛcchatha suvratāḥ, pūrvaraṅgavidhānasya . . .* "I will tell you the secret tale for which you are asking me, O pious men, namely about the performance of the Pūrvaraṅga". [Similarly 36.15 B.]

[144] Abhinavagupta ad 1.57B: *tadanta iti, nāndyante parisamāptau, anukṛtir iti nāṭyam, tatra ca baddhe 'ti guṇanikā* ["introduction to a drama"] *yojitā, na tu prayoga ity etac cāsat, tatpūrvottaravyāghātāt* ["contradiction"]. *pūrvaṁ hy uktam: evaṁ nāṭyam idam ityādi nāndī kṛte 'tyantam* [51–56], *vaksyate ca* [58b]: *brahmādayaḥ prayogaparitoṣitā iti. tasmād baddhe 'ti prastāvitā, na tu niṣpāditā. prastāvanā tāvat prayukte 'ty arthaḥ. anye tv anukṛtir iti nāṭyānukārarūpā prastāvane 'ty āhuḥ, "kṛtā tadante 'nukṛtiḥ" iti ca paṭhanti. etadupajīvanenai 'va cirantanā kavayo "nāndyante sūtradhāraḥ" iti pustake likhanti sma. kiṁ prastāvitam ity āha yathā daityā iti, ḍima-samavakāre-'hāmṛgādīnām anyatamaḥ prayogaḥ prāstāvī 'ty arthaḥ. yady api Bharataputrair daśarūpakam abhyastaṁ tathā 'pi na yugapat sarvaḥ prayoktuṁ pāryata ity evam uktam . . .* [For *baddhā* cf. 36.71–73 C.].

[145] BhNŚ. 1.51C (KM[2], 53B) *evaṁ nāṭyam idam buddhvā sarvaiḥ sutaiḥ saha* (52) *Svātināradasaṁyukto vedavedāṅgakāraṇam, upasthito 'haṁ lokeśaṁ prayogārthaṁ kṛtāñjaliḥ* (53) *nāṭyasya grahaṇaṁ prāptaṁ brūhi kiṁ karavāṇy aham, etat tu vacanaṁ śrutvā pratyuvāca Pitāmahaḥ* (54) *mahān ayaṁ prayogasya samayaḥ samupasthitaḥ, ayaṁ dhvajamahaḥ śrīmān Mahendrasya pravartate* (55) *atre 'dānīm ayaṁ vedo nāṭyasaṁjñaḥ prayujyatām, tatas tasmin dhvajamahe nihatāsuradānave* (56) *prahṛṣṭāmarasaṁkīrṇe mahendravijayotsave, nāndī kṛtā mayā pūrvam āśīrvacanasaṁyutā* (57)

This, then, is Bharata's account of the "first" performance of a drama. Some general conclusions that can be drawn from it have already been indicated above, p. 128. In a different context we shall meet with another account. For the present moment, however, the tale of the Nāṭyaśāstra has to be interrupted in order to study more closely the various presents of the gods.

5. THE PRESENTS OF THE GODS (NŚ. 1.59ff.)

As we have seen at the end of the preceding section, the gods, pleased with the performance by Bharata and his sons, gave all sorts of gifts to the actors. The Nāṭyaśāstra describes them as follows (1.59b–63): "First of all Indra, pleased, gave his glorious banner, and Brahmā the *kuṭilaka*. Likewise Varuṇa (gave) the golden pitcher (*bhṛṅgāra*), Sūrya the parasol, Śiva success (*siddhi*) and Vāyu the fan. Viṣṇu (gave) the throne (*siṁhāsana*), Kubera the head diadem (*mukuṭa*). [And Sarasvatī gave the gift of being well audible and visible][146]. And all the rest, Devas as well as Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and Pannagas, very pleased in that gathering, the glad celestials, gave in accordance with their (?) different descent (*jāti*) and qualities[147] to my sons, according to the latters' various parts, the (appropriate) speech, the (various) psychic states, emotions, good looks, the right movements (?) and strength"[148].

In general, the presents are clearly emblems characteristic of the various gods, e.g., the banner given by Indra and the fan given by the Wind. As for the throne which is presented to gods and kings[149], it occurs in Buddhist iconography from the first century A.D. onwards and has been shown to be closely connected with the *yūpa* (sacrificial stake) and the cosmic centre[150]. It is not surprising, therefore, that Viṣṇu, who is a god of the centre, offers the throne as his gift. The only exception is, at first sight, the parasol, which is presented by the Sun god, although it gives protection *against* the heat of the sun (cf. the synonym *ātapa-tra*). Abhinavagupta was apparently also struck by this anomaly but his

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aṣṭāṅgapadasaṁyuktā vicitrā devasaṁmatā [v. 1. *vedanirmitā*], *tadante 'nukṛtir baddhā yathā Daityāḥ surair jitāḥ* (58) *saṁpheṭa-vidrava-kṛtā chedya-bhedyā-'havātmikā, tato Brahmādayo devāḥ prayogaparitoṣitāḥ* (59) *pradadur hṛṣṭamanasaḥ sarvopakaraṇāni naḥ . . .*

[146] This line is lacking in some manuscripts.

[147] Read *nānājātiguṇāśrayāḥ* for *-ān* C?

[148] 1.59b *prītas tu prathamaṁ Śakro dattavān svadhvajaṁ* (v. 1. *svaṁ dhvajaṁ*) *śubham* (60) *Brahmā kuṭilakaṁ* (v. 1. *kamaṇḍaluṁ*) *caiva bhṛṅgāraṁ Varuṇas tathā* (v. 1. *-ṇaḥ śubham*), *Sūryaś chattraṁ Śivaḥ siddhiṁ Vāyur vyajanam eva ca* (61) *Viṣṇuḥ siṁhāsanaṁ caiva Kubero mukuṭaṁ tathā, [śrāvyatvaṁ prekṣaṇīyasya dadau devī Sarasvatī]*, (62) *śeṣā ye devagandharvā yakṣarākṣasapannagāḥ, tasmin sadasy atiprītā* (v. 1. *abhipretān*) *nānājātiguṇāśrayān* (63) *aṁśāṁśair bhāṣitān* (v. 1. *bhāṣitaṁ*) *bhāvān rasān rūpaṁ kriyābalam* (v. 1. *balaṁ tathā*), *dattavantaḥ prahṛṣṭās te matsutebhyo divaukasaḥ.*

[149] Cf. 13.208 (12.167 KM) *devānāṁ nṛpatīnāṁ ca dadyāt siṁhāsanaṁ dvijāḥ.*

[150] Jeannine Auboyer, Le trône et son symbolisme dans l'Inde Ancienne (Paris, 1949), pp. 34, 74ff.

ingenious explanation to the effect that the parasol is an imitation of the clouds, which are a product of the sun [151] would seem *astutius quam verius*. In a different context (Bhāg. Pur. XVIII.18.15) the *chattra* is a present of the sky (*dyauḥ*).

As for the *kuṭilaka*, this is a bent stick. Abhinavagupta explains it as "a curved stick used by the *vidūṣaka*, a staff which is the brahmins' (?) weapon" [152]. This must be based on NŚ. 13.143f., which describes the natural gait of the *vidūṣaka*, who has the *kuṭilaka* in his left hand while making the *caturaka*-gesture with his right one [153]. The *kuṭilaka* is apparently identical with the *daṇḍakāṣṭha*, which is described, immediately after the manufacture of the *jarjara*, in 23.179–182 (21.172ff. KM). Cf. particularly verse 180: "It should be made curved in its third part [?] and have (good) characteristics" [154]. The passage does not mention how this *daṇḍakāṣṭha* was to be used but Ghosh rightly refers to Mālavikāgnimitra IV.15.36 (29), where Nipuṇikā says: "I will, behind a pillar, frighten this inferior brahmin, who is afraid of snakes, with this staff of his own, which is crooked like a snake" [155]. A similar, apparently stereotyped, expression occurs in Ratnāvalī II.5.12, where the *vidūṣaka* says with reference to

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[151] *chattram atra vitānaḥ : jaladānāṁ sūryodbhavatvāt tatpratimaḥ.*

[152] *vakradaṇḍako vidūṣakopayogī, brahmāyudhātmā daṇḍaḥ.*

[153] *svabhāvajāyāṁ vinyasya kuṭilaṁ vāmake kare* (144) *tathā dakṣiṇahaste ca kuryāc caturakaṁ tataḥ.*

[154] *vakraṁ caiva hi tat kāryaṁ* (*kartavyaṁ* 21.183B) *tribhāge lakṣaṇānvitam*. The v. l. *tvaiva* (21.172 KM) for *caiva* is apparently a mere misreading. As for *tribhāga*, it denotes a third part of the eye, e.g. Kādambarī 165,16 (ed. Peterson) *madanaśara-śalyavedanākūṇitatribhāgena nātimīlitena locanayugalena* and pw.: "ein Drittel des Auges bei Seitenblicken". It cannot mean, as far as I can see, "three bents", as Ghosh translates it. Although it is tempting to read *tribhaṅgalakṣaṇānvitam* "having three bents and (good) characteristics", none of the editions B C KM mention a variant reading for *tribhāge* and it is not clear when *tribhaṅga* is attested for the first time. The only occurrence that is known to me from literature is in the late Gopālakelicandrikā (p. 46 line 1, cf. *tribhaṅgin* p. 124 line 32) but it is well-known in archaeology. The word *bhuaṁga(ma)kuḍila*, which is used with reference to the *daṇḍakāṣṭha*, may indeed indicate that it was curved like the Indonesian *keris* (dagger), which has been explained as representing a serpent.

[155] *bhuaṁgabhīruaṁ bamhabandhuṁ imiṇā bhuaṁga(ma)kuḍileṇa attaṇo daṇḍakaṭṭheṇa tambhandaridā bhāaāmi* (*bhāaissaṁ*). Shankar Pāṇḍurang Pandit omitted *attaṇo*, see The Mālavikāgnimitra, A Sanskrit play by Kālidāsa, with the commentary of Kāṭayavema, ed. with notes by Sh. P. P. (Bombay Sanskrit Series No. VI), 2nd ed., Bombay 1889. Of all his manuscripts, however, only one modern MS. omits the word, whereas it occurs in his six manuscripts ABCDE and the Telugu manuscript G. Whether or not Kāṭayavema read *attaṇo* in his text is not sufficiently clear from his *chāyā*, which in the edition referred to does not contain *ātmanaḥ*. In the recent editions by R. D. Karmarkar (4th ed., Poona 1950) and Sane-Godbole-Ursekar (2nd ed., Bombay 1959) *attaṇo* is also omitted. Since, however, it is the *lectio difficilior* and has the support of the manuscripts, it must be accepted as the authentic reading. If so, it must be taken, like Skt *ātmanaḥ*, in the meaning "eius ipsius" (see PW.). The alternative would be to assume that Nipuṇikā, while speaking the words quoted, picks up a stick from the ground. This is very unlikely because parallel passages show a stereotyped use of similar phrases with reference to the staff of the *vidūṣaka*. See above.

the *daṇḍakāṣṭha* in his hand (6.12) "With this stick, which is crooked like the heart of a deceiver I shall . . . throw you to the ground" [156] and in Mṛcchakaṭikā I.42.15: (angrily raising his staff) . . . "Therefore I shall smash him to pieces with this stick which is crooked like the lot of people like us" [157]. Also in the Śakuntalā there are references to the *daṇḍakāṣṭha* as an attribute of the *vidūṣaka* [158]. Outside the drama the *daṇḍakāṣṭha* occurs, beside the *daṇḍa*, as a name for the ascetic's staff, e.g. in the story of Uttaṅka in the Pauṣyaparvan [159]. It is probable, therefore, that the *kuṭilaka* or *daṇḍakāṣṭha* characterized the *vidūṣaka* as a brahmin. If so, this may explain why it is Brahmā who gives the *kuṭilaka*.

Varuṇa's gift confronts us with one of the problems of Rigvedic mythology, about the interpretation of which no general *consensus* has been attained yet. Some of the technical aspects have been discussed at greater length in a separate article, to which the reader may be referred [160]. According to Vedic cosmology there was a receptacle (*pātra*) of the cosmic waters under the earth, in which the world tree was rooted. This receptacle was identical with the pail (*kóśa*) or amṛta-jar (*kaláśa*) [161], to which the texts often refer and which contained the elixir of the waters. Varuṇa was imagined as residing in the day-time in this nether world, at the bottom of the world tree. The jar is sometimes identified with the earth, of which in a sense it forms part. Indra's demiurgic act of opening the (primordial) hill in order to release the waters meant, therefore, the breaking open of the hill, which was conceived as a jar. It will be shown below that Indra's act was ritually imitated on the stage by breaking an earthenware jar (*kumbha*) in which a small piece of gold had been laid (NŚ. 3.72), apparently to indicate that this jar represented the golden pitcher. Since gold is well-known from the brāhmaṇas as symbolic of life, it seems a reasonable guess that the golden pitcher expresses that its contents consisted of the waters of life. Perhaps there is a connection with the golden pail (*hiraṇyáya kóśa*) in the "Unconquerable City"

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[156] *imiṇā pisuṇajaṇahiaakuḍileṇa daṇḍa(k)aṭṭheṇa . . . (bhūmīe) tumaṁ pāḍaissaṁ (iti hantum udyataḥ).*

[157] *(sakrodhaṁ daṇḍakāṣṭham udyamya) . . . tā ediṇā amhārisajaṇabhāadheakuḍileṇa daṇḍakaṭṭheṇa . . . kuṭṭaissaṁ.* The use of *kuḍila* in the Ratnāvalī with reference to the "crooked" stick and the deceitful heart of a cheat is more natural than this passage, where the *vidūṣaka* likens the crookedness of the stick to that of his own lot. This seems to be a later variation of a current expression. Since the words do not occur in the Cārudatta, they may have been added by the author of our version of the Mṛcchakaṭikā, which was probably composed after 600 A.D. Therefore, the possibility that the author of this version here imitates the Ratnāvalī cannot be ruled out a priori.

[158] II.0.19 edd. Cappeller and Pischel *iti dāṇḍakāṣṭham avalambya tiṣṭhati* (v. l. *sthitaḥ*), VI.9.1–2 Pischel [1], 8.1–3 Kale *bho vaassa, ciṭṭha dāva jāva daṇḍaaṭṭheṇa kandappabāṇaṁ ṇāsemi (iti daṇḍakāṣṭham udyamya cūtāṅkuraṁ pātayitum icchati).*

[159] Mahābhārata, interpolation 204* after I.3.138.

[160] See India Maior, Congratulation Volume-J. Gonda (Leiden, 1973), pp. 144–155. See also IIJ. 8 (1964), p. 107ff.

[161] For these words see Hillebrandt, Vedische Mythologie I[2], pp. 432–438, especially p. 435.

(*pūr ayodhyā*) of the gods [162] but if so, the character of this divine city [163] and its relation to Varuṇa's nether world [164] remain to be elucidated. In later times the use of the golden pitcher was widely spread, not only in ritual. In the Tamil poem Cilappatikāram the *talaikkōl*, which was obviously identical with the *jarjara* and which was identified with Indra's son Jayanta (Cil. 3.119 *intiraciṟuvaṉ cayantaṉ āk' eṉa*), was bathed in the holy water from a golden pitcher before it was carried into the theatre (3.121–122 *puṇṇiya naṉṉīr poṟkuṭatt' ēnti, maṇṇiya piṉṉar*). In iconography the connection between Varuṇa and the *amṛta*-cask or jar is but seldom expressed. However, in the reliefs of Cave IV of Badami, dating from the sixth century A.D., Varuṇa is depicted as "a male seated on a *makara* with a mace in his left hand and a cup in his right hand" [165] and elsewhere as "seated beside the amṛta-bowl" [166]. In this connection the words *vāruṇaṁ kumbham* of Agnipurāṇa 64.4 should be noted. The Badami reliefs may well be based on the Vedic mythological conception but iconography seems to offer no parallels to the reliefs [167].

6. DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAYHOUSE

After Viśvakarmā had built the playhouse he went to Brahmā's *sabhā* (1.80) to announce the completion of his work and to invite the World-Father for a visit. Brahmā, along with Indra and with "all the gods accompanied by others" [168] then came to look at it. Brahmā thereupon ordered the gods to contribute to the protection of the theatre with "parts" (*aṁśabhāga*) of their essence [169].

The following list of gods (1.83–95) shows that the theatre was considered a replica of the cosmos. The italicized names also occur in chapter III, where the consecration of a new playhouse is described (3.1ff.):

1. *Candramas* "Moon": *rakṣaṇe maṇḍapasya*, "for the guarding of the (whole) theatre". Whereas the Sun is not mentioned at all, the most

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[162] Cf. Ath. Saṁh. X.2.31 and Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. I², p. 326.

[163] In the third heaven? Cf. AS. V.4.3 *aśvatthó devasádanas tṛtíyasyām itó divi, tátrā 'mṛtasya cákṣaṇaṁ devāḥ kúṣṭham avanvata* "the holy fig tree which is a seat for the Devas is in the third heaven from here: there the Devas won the *kúṣṭha*-(herb) as a manifestation of the *amṛta*".

[164] On this fundamental problem see India Maior, p. 156 and Hist. of Rel. 15, p. 118 n. 22. The third heaven apparently represented what Brede W. Kristensen called "the absolute life". As a world which transcended the dualism of the phenomenal world it had some traits in common with the primordial undifferentiated world which preceded it.

[165] See R. D. Banerji, Basreliefs of Badami, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 25 (Calcutta 1928), p. 56 and Plate XXVIIb.

[166] Plate XXIIIa. See also P. K. Agrawala, The Pūrṇa Kalaśa, fig. 48.

[167] See A. Gopinath Rao, Elements of Hindu Iconography, vol. II-2 (1916).

[168] NŚ. 1.81 *tataḥ saha Mahendreṇa suraiḥ sarvaiś ca setaraiḥ*. Abhinavagupta explains *itare* as *vidyādharagandharvādyāḥ*.

[169] 1.82 *aṁśabhāgair bhavadbhis tu rakṣyo 'yaṁ nāṭyamaṇḍapaḥ*. Abhinavagupta explains *aṁśair* by *yāni bhajanāny adhiṣṭhānāni taiḥ* "with the sharing (possession?), that is, the power of control".

important function, viz. the protection of the whole theatre, is here assigned to the Moon. For the moon as the guardian deity of the playhouse see also Raghavan, note ad Sāgaranandin 1110 (=NŚ. 5.109 *jitaṁ Somena vai rājñā*) and comm. on Mālatīmādhava (Lévi II, p. 24). The moon is satified by the *nāndī* (NŚ. 5.51, Sāgaranandin 1120). Any connection between the theatre building and the night or nether world cannot, however, be proved.

2. *Lokapālas* "Regents of the points of the sky": *dikṣu* "in the quarters". It should be noted that Agni, Yama and Varuṇa, all of them *lokapālas*, are also mentioned separately.

3. *Mārutas* (Maruts 3.5) "the winds": *vidikṣu* "in the intermediate points of the compass".

4. *Mitra* and Varuṇa: *nepathyabhūmau* "in the floor of the dressing room", respectively *ambare* (=?). The line 1.84 BC *nepathyabhūmau Mitras tu nikṣipto Varuṇo 'mbare* poses several problems. In the parallel list of Chapter III Varuṇa is omitted (3.6 *Mitram Agniṁ surān Rudrān*) and from the prayer to Varuṇa in 3.63–64, which characteristically differs from those to the other gods, it can be inferred that he was still dreaded as an ominous god. The dressing room was the place where the introductory part of the *pūrvaraṅga*, the *nirgīta*, was performed to appease the demons (5.11, 36f.). The reason was no doubt that this part of the *pūrvaraṅga* was too inauspicious for the stage, which was a consecrated place. There was, accordingly, a contrast between the stage and the *nepathya*, a contrast which probably must be defined in terms of sacred versus profane, rather than of the celestial world versus the nether world. In any case, hell and demons could be represented on the stage (14.6), and the performance of the Amṛtamanthana (see ch. I, § 18) shows that demons had been common on the stage from earliest times – but only to enact their defeat. As for the term *nepathyabhūmau*, the dressing room is always denoted by the words *nepathya*, *nepathyagṛha* (e.g., 2.35, 62; 14.2, 33. 221 line 2) or *nepathyagṛhaka* (2.69, 95). So *bhūmi* must here have the specific meaning of "floor" (cf. 2.25). In view of the old contrast between Mitra and Varuṇa, this might contain a clue to *ambare* "in the sky (?)", if this should be understood as the ceiling of the dressing room, but both the occurrence of Varuṇa in this context and the place where he is located remain puzzling[170]. Abhinavagupta does not explain *ambare*.

5. *Vahni* (3.6: Agni), the Fire God: *vedikārakṣaṇe* "appointed to protect the raised floor of the stage". Abhinavagupta's comment (vol. I, p. 31, line 10) does not help, except that it states that the *vedikā* was part of the stage: *raṅgavedikā, tatra tikṣṇo 'dhiṣṭhāte 'ty arthaḥ*. The *vedikā* is also mentioned in the description of the wooden ornamentation of the theatre, the so-called *dārukarma* or *kāṣṭhavidhi* (2.77 *nānāgrathitavedika*) and at

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[170] Since no variant reading is given in B, the reading *Varuṇeśvaraḥ* in KM seems to be corrupt. Ghosh translates "the space [within the building]", but Raghuvaṁśa takes it as *khālī ākāś bhāg mẽ Varuṇa*. Similarly M. Chr. Byrski (see n. 1), p. 34f.

2.98, 99, where Ghosh renders it by "plinth". Mankad does not mention it. The translation "raised floor" is only tentative [171].

6. Sarve *divaukasas* "all celestial gods": *bhāṇḍe* "in the musical instruments (specifically the big drum)". For the worship of the instruments, and especially of the *mṛdaṅga* (drum) see Clifford R. Jones, JAOS. 93 (1973), p. 295 n. 29 and cf. IIJ. 16, p. 258. There can be little doubt that *divaukasaḥ*, here just as elsewhere (e.g., 1.63, 71; 5.58), means the gods. Cf. also the parallel passage 3.6 *Mitram Agniṁ surān Rudrān* [172]. It was a general belief that the sound of thunder of the big drum was caused by the celestials. The *nāṭyamaṇḍapa* should be constructed in such a way that the deep sound of the drums comes out clearly. Cf. 2.82 *gambhīrasvaratā yena kutapasya bhaviṣyati.*

7. The four *varṇas: stambheṣu* "in the pillars". The four pillars represent the four social classes, cf. 2.46–49 *brāhmaṇastambha, kṣatriyastambha, vaiśyastambha* and *śūdrastambha*. The classes are here deified, just as in 3.6 *Mitram Agniṁsurān Rudrān varṇān Kālaṁ Kaliṁ tathā* [173].

8. Ādityas and *Rudras: stambhāntareṣu* "in the interstices between the pillars". It deserves notice that the Vasus are omitted and that Mitra-Varuṇa and Indra also occur elsewhere separately.

9. Bhūtas: *dhāraṇīṣu* "in the rows", cf. 2.78 *supīṭhadhāraṇī* "row of good seats" [174]. For the Bhūtas see below sub 20.

10. *Apsarasas: śālāsu* "in the rooms" (?). It is not clear which rooms are meant. See below for *dvāraśālās.*

11. *Yakṣiṇīs: sarvaveśmasu* "in all apartments". It is not clear what exactly the term denotes, nor in what respect the *veśman* differed from the *śālā*. It cannot mean "in the entire house" (Ghosh) because of the plural form and because it would then be synonymous with *maṇḍapa* (see above sub 1).

12. *Mahodadhi* "Ocean" (: 3.7 Samudra): *mahīpṛṣṭhe* "on the (bare) ground)" (lit. on the surface of the earth). The ground (*bhūmi*) is mentioned with regard to the very first preliminaries of the building of a theatre (2.24, 25), cf. 2.27 *vasumatī*). "Ocean" (*samudra*) was from Vedic times

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[171] The translation "the stage" (Ghosh) is inexact; in 2.77 he does not translate the word *nānāgrathitavedikam*. Raghuvaṁśa explains it by *yah sundar vyavasthit vedikāō par ādhārit*. For *vedikā* "(small) platform" see Mānasāra 15.54 and 58, 19.31 and 32. Less likely is the meaning "railing" (see, e.g., G. H. Schokker, The Pādatāḍitaka of Śyāmilaka, The Hague 1966, p. 272. Implausible Byrski (n. 1), p. 35.

[172] Curiously, Abhinavagupta takes *divaukasas* in the sense "clouds": *meghā mandragambhīraśabdasiddhaye* (etc.), which was accepted by Ghosh, vol. I, Introd. p. liii, vol. II, p. 12, although *sarve* speaks against it. The celestials could give the big drum (*mṛdaṅga*) the sound of thunder. Was the correct reading perhaps *meghamandragambhīraśabda* "having the deep and low sound of clouds"?

[173] Abhinavagupta explains this as follows: *varṇā iti: tadadhiṣṭhātāro devatāviśeṣāḥ.* Ghosh's objection that the four classes are nowhere deified (vol. II, p. 38 n. 1) is refuted by the fact that they are so in the Nāṭyaśāstra (see 3.6 and cf. n. 182).

[174] *dhāraṇīṣu* is not found in two manuscripts. KM reads *dhāraṇeṣu*, whereas Ghosh translates "the railing (of seats)".

on the specific term for the primordial waters under the earth. From the description of the building it appears that only the surface of the ground was ritually purified by ploughing and removing all bones and potsherds (2.26). Since the guardian deities do not go beyond the boundaries of the sacred area, the surface of the earth is here assigned to the Ocean as one of the cosmic entities.

13. *Kṛtānta* and *Kāla: dvāraśālāniyuktau* "in charge of the lodge at the entrance" [175]. There is a text-critical and interpretative problem. Ghosh (1.87C) reads with some manuscripts *dvāraśālāniyuktas tu kṛtāntaḥ Kāla eva ca*, where the last words may be taken to imply that *kṛtāntaḥ* is here an epithet of Kāla. In 3.68C, however, all editions (B C KM) read *tathā Kṛtāntaḥ Kālaś ca sarvaprāṇivadheśvarau*. In spite of the dual Ghosh here translates "O Yama, the Fate . . ., the end of all actions" but since Yama is specifically mentioned in 3.26 and 61, the author apparently refers to Kṛtānta and Kāla as two different deities. As the variant reading for 3.68 *sarvaprāṇadhaneśvaraḥ* (in two MSS.) shows, there has long been some divergence in the interpretation of this passage.

14. Nāgamukhyau (v. l. Nāgarājau) "the two chief Nāgas": *dvārapārśve tu* "beside the door(s)", (that is, the entrance of the theatre?). Variant readings *dvārapatre tu, dvārapatreṣu* "in the door-blades" (B KM Ragh.), the latter variant being the reading which Abhinavagupta explained by the gloss *dvārabahutvāc ca bahuvacanam* [176]. Since the Nāṭyaśāstra elsewhere mentions three chief Nāgas (Śeṣa, Vāsuki and Takṣaka, see 1.92f., 3.78f.), it remains doubtful which two can have been meant here. Abhinavagupta takes them to be Ananta and Gulika (?), whereas Ghosh and Raghuvaṁśa identify them as Ananta and Vāsuki.

15. *Yamadaṇḍa* (: 3.6 Kāladaṇḍa): *dehalyām* "on the threshold".

16. Śūla "(Śiva's) pike": *upari* ("the top of the door" Ghosh).

17. *Niyati* and *Mṛtyu: dvārapālau* "door-keepers".

18. *Mahendra* (: 3.4 Indra): *pārśve raṅgapīṭhasya* "by the side of the stage".

19. *Vidyut* (daityaniṣūdanī): *mattavāraṇyām* "in the Mattavāraṇī". See Clifford R. Jones, op. c., p. 295: "the covered veranda or balcony-like structure with seats and backrests . . ."? In 3.69 it is the *vāstudevatāḥ* who are residing in the *mattavāraṇī*.

20. *Bhūtas*, *Yakṣas*, Piśācas and *Guhyakas*: *stambheṣu mattavāraṇyāḥ* "in the pillars of the *mattavāraṇī*". In 3.65f., however, the Yakṣas and Guhyakas are connected with Kubera (as usual) and in 1.95 they are located *adhastād raṅgapīṭhasya rakṣaṇe*. The Bhūtas were already mentioned sub 9. For the Yakṣas and Guhyakas see also sub 24.

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[175] *dvāraśālā* B C Ragh., cf. Mṛcch. III.2.3, 21.2 *bāhiladuālaśālā*, Mudr. I.10.5 *dvāraprakoṣṭhaśālā*. KM has *dvāraśākhā*, which is corrupt.

[176] The translation "the two blades of the door" (Ghosh) is hardly correct. In Nāgārjunakoṇḍa the entrance has two doors, one behind the other. See Tarlekar, Studies (n. 1), plate XI.

21. *Vajra* (*daityanibarhaṇa*): *jarjare* "in the *jarjara*". It is one of the characteristics of the *jarjara* that, although it stands for the Indra-tree (*indradhvaja*), it has at the same time the function of Indra's weapon (*praharaṇa*), the *vajra*. Cf. 1.69–70 *gṛhītvā dhvajam uttamam . . . jarjarīkṛtadehāṁs tān akaroj jarjareṇa saḥ* : 72 *aho praharaṇaṁ divyam idam āsāditaṁ tvayā* and 3.12 (*jarjarapūjā*) *tvaṁ mahendrapraharaṇaṁ sarvavighnanibarhaṇam*, while according to our passage (1.91) the *vajra* is one of the divine powers that is located in the *jarjara* (*jarjare caiva nikṣiptaṁ vajraṁ daityanibarhaṇam*). Cf. 3.79 *nirmitas tvaṁ mahāvīryo vajrasāro mahātanuḥ*.

22. *Brahmā*, *Śaṅkara*, *Viṣṇu*, *Skanda* and the three Mahānāgas Śeṣa, Vāsuki and Takṣaka: *parvasu* "in the (five) joints (of the *jarjara*). Similarly 3.78f., where the gods mentioned are Brahmā, Hara, Janārdana, Kumāra, but only one Pannagottama is mentioned (see sub 24). The bamboo staff which is used as *jarjara* must be *pañcaparvā caturgranthiḥ* (23.174), that is, it must have five joints and four nodes. It has been pointed out above [177] that in the *jarjara*, as the cosmic axis, all the gods of the totality are located and that Viṣṇu's place in the middle of that axis corresponds to his function of connecting link (p. 140) between upper world and nether world. Only Skanda's (Kumāra's) place below Viṣṇu calls for a closer examination. If the interpretation of Viṣṇu's middle position is correct, Skanda is on the side of the nether world but the Nāṭyaśāstra is rather contradictory in this respect. While in 3.24 he is located in the East together with Indra, Sūrya, etc. (*Skandārkau*, v.l. *Skandaḥ Sūryo*), in 3.31 his place is in the western pillar. Such a detailed investigation cannot be undertaken here.

23. *Brahmā: raṅgapīṭhasya madhye* "in the centre of the stage". From the description of the consecration of the stage in Chapter III it is apparent that the stage as a whole is considered a replica of the cosmos and that its centre, indicated by lines, is the *brāhma maṇḍala*. Since in the ideal picture of the cosmos the *indradhvaja* should stand in this centre, there is no contradiction between Brahmā being located both here and at the top of the *jarjara*. See also IIJ. 16, p. 253.

24. The Pātālavāsins, viz. the *Yakṣa*s, *Guhyaka*s and *Pannagas: adhastād raṅgapīṭhasya* "under the stage". The Pātāla was situated at the lower end of the world axis, see p. 89. Since the centre of the stage, the *brāhma maṇḍala*, was identical with the cosmic centre, it is natural that the Pātāla was situated under the stage. In 3.79 the *Pannagottama* "chief of the serpents" is said to be in the lowest joint of the *jarjara*, which place is cosmologically identical with the one here assigned to the Pannagas and in 1.93 to the three Mahānāgas Śeṣa, Vāsuki and Takṣaka. On account of 3.7 *nāgarājaṁ ca Vāsukim* it may be guessed that the "highest Pannaga" of 3.79 is also Vāsuki. It is hard, therefore, to identify the two *Nāgamukhya*s,

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[177] See p. 139 and IIJ. 13 (1972), p. 283, 16 (1974), p. 252, India Maior, Congrat. Vol. J. Gonda (1973), p. 151.

discussed above sub 14, although there are several repetitions in this list. The Yakṣas and Guhyakas have already been mentioned above, sub 19. They are commonly associated with Kubera (see, e.g., Sørensen's Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata).

All the italicized names of the preceding list recur in Chapter III, where instead of a legendary tale an exact description of the ceremony of consecration of a newly built playhouse is given. Therefore, it is not correct to say with regard to the names just mentioned "Such deities are nowhere to be met with" (Ghosh, Transl., p. 12 n. 1). The authenticity of the list cannot be doubted. It is, however, far from complete, as is apparent from a comparison with Chapter III. Some details may strike us as curious, such as the fact that the Moon is mentioned first of all but that the Sun is omitted, that the Ādityas and Rudras are recorded but not the Vasus, Mitra and Varuṇa but not Viṣṇu (except, of course, in the jarjara). Is there a predominance of elements of the nether world? Why do the Ocean, Kṛtānta and Kāla, the Nāgas, Yama's staff, the inhabitants of the Pātāla and the Bhūtas[178] occur? There are many details which would deserve a closer examination than is possible here. If Fate (*Niyati*) and Death (*Mṛtyu*) were "doorkeepers of the stage" (Ghosh), this could throw an interesting light on the character of the *nepathya*, but the "threshold" mentioned in close connection with the door suggests that the entrance of the theatre is meant. In that case, however, the question recurs: Why had one to pass by Death when entering the theatre? And why should the playhouse be built in the shape of a cave and was the stage on the west side so that the audience was looking in the direction that was associated with Varuṇa's nether world?[179] But then, why was it forbidden to give a performance at midnight and at noon?[180] On the other hand, during the consecration the gods got their respective places on the stage assigned in the evening

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[178] They occur twice, in 1.86 *dhāraṇīṣu sthitā bhūtāḥ* (v. 1. *dhāraṇeṣv atha bhūtāni* KM) and in 1.90 *stambheṣu mattavāraṇyāḥ sthāpitāḥ paripālane Bhūtā Yakṣāḥ Piśācāś ca Guhyakāś ca mahābalāḥ*. This raises the question as to whether two different recensions have got mixed up, or if the term *bhūta* denotes two different categories. The same problem recurs in 3.23 as against 3.27. The first line reads *ādau niveśyo bhagavān sārdhaṁ Bhūtagaṇair Bhavaḥ*, where the last word must be the correct reading (as against the variant readings *navaiḥ*, *Śivaḥ*, see KM) on account of 3.9 *sarvalokeśvaraṁ Bhavam*. Here, as often, the *Bhūtas* form the retinue of Śiva, cf. 4.11 *tato Bhūtagaṇā hṛṣṭāḥ karmabhāvānukīrtanāt, Mahādevaś ca suprītaḥ Pitāmaham athā 'bravīt*. In 3.27, however, *nairṛtyāṁ Rākṣasāṁś caiva sarvabhūtān niveśayet* inauspicious beings are meant, just as in 3.17 *dināṇte dāruṇe ghore muhūrte bhūtadaivate* "in the evening, in the hard and horrible hour over which the *Bhūtas* preside". On the other hand, in 3.30 the *brahmarṣi-bhūta-saṁghas* are located in the most divine region, the North-East. For a non-Sanskrit tradition concerning the *Bhūtas* cf. Dikshitar's note ad Cilappatikāram III.95–114 (Translation p. 102 n. 1, p. 115 n.): "The names of the deities of būtas worshipped are Vacciradēhaṉ, Vacciradandaṉ, Varuṇaṉ and Prattakēśvaraṉ (*Śila*, p. 115 n. Cf. Jīvakacintāmaṇi st. 672)".

[179] 2.80 *kāryaḥ śailaguhākāro dvibhūmir nāṭyamaṇḍapaḥ*. For the stage on the west side of the theatre see IIJ.16, p. 266ff.

[180] 27.95 *ardharātre na yuñjīta na madhyāhne tathaiva ca*.

(3.17 *niśāyām*), that is, at a dangerous moment of the day, and at this same time (2.38) offerings to the *lokapālas* are brought during the laying of the foundations. At night, too, the gods were asked for protection and aid in the performance.

7. THE CONSECRATION OF THE THEATRE I

It has already been noted above that Chapter III also contains two lists of tutelary deities of the theatre. Although these lists on the whole agree fairly well with that of Chapter One, they show some interesting differences. In the first chapter the two central gods are Brahmā and Indra and there is an entire lack of Śiva-worship. References to a worship of Brahmā are generally and rightly taken as evidence of an early date. See, e.g., Ghosh, Text I, Introduction p. lxxvii, who, however, failed to notice the characteristic differences in this respect between the first books of the Nāṭyaśāstra, which discrepancies inevitably point to the conclusion of a different authorship. Just as Chapter Two, the third chapter is apparently the work of a devoted Śivaite. His list contains the names of the gods to whom the *nāṭyācārya*, after fasting for three days, is to pay homage (*namas*). It begins with

A) 1. Mahādevam sarvalokodbhavaṁ Bhavam "the great god Bhava, the origin of the whole world" [181].

2. *Padmayoni* (=Brahmā). From the fact that this god here occupies the second place it may be inferred that the list has been reworked and originally began with the World-Father.

3. Suraguru (=Bṛhaspati).

4. *Viṣṇu.*

5. *Indra.*

6. *Guha* (=Kārttikeya).

He then continues with:

B) 1. Sarasvatī 2. Lakṣmī 3. Siddhi 4. Medhā 5. Smṛti 6. Mati

and ends up with the following gods:

C) 1. *Soma* 2. Sūrya 3. *Maruts* 4. *Lokapālas* 5. Aśvins 6. *Mitra* 7. *Agni* 8. *Suras* 9. *Rudras* [182] 10. *Varṇas* 11. *Kāla* 12. Kali 13. *Mṛtyu* 14. *Niyati* 15. Kāladaṇḍa (see 11.) 16. Viṣṇupraharaṇa (see A4) 17. *Nāgarāja Vāsuki* 18. *Vajra* 19. *Vidyut* 20. *Samudra* [183] 21. Gandharvas and Apsarasas 22. Munis 23. Nāṭyakumārīs 24. Mahāgrāmaṇī (also 33.272!).

The names have here been enumerated in the same order in which they occur in the text. It seems clear that the list has been composed of three different lists: A) is the group of great gods who reside in the *Jarjara* (1.92–93), with the sole difference that Śiva here occupies the first place

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[181] Thus B KM Ragh. C reads *sarvalokeśvaram* "Lord of the whole world".

[182] 3.6 *Mitram Agniṁ surān Rudrān varṇān Kālaṁ Kaliṁ tathā* C, *surān varṇān Rudrān* B, *svarān varṇān Rudrān* KM Ragh. This corresponds to 1.84 *Mitra . . . Vahni, divaukasaḥ, varṇāḥ . . . Ādityāś caiva Rudrāś ca.* Therefore Ghosh's translation "other gods such as Rudra" cannot be correct.

[183] *vajravidyutsamudrāṁś ca* C. Probably one ocean is meant.

and that his original place has been assigned to Bṛhaspati, who is very rarely mentioned in the Nāṭyaśāstra[184]. Similarly the Serpents have been left out, but Indra (Mahendra in the preceding list) has been inserted between Viṣṇu and Kārttikeya. Apart from traces of sectarianism and a few alterations, this group is basically not very much different from that of Chapter One.

Of group C) almost all of the first twenty items are found in the same order in Chapter One. The last ones (21–24) can easily be accounted for as later additions.

Most interesting, however, is group B). There can be no doubt that this list contains the *nāṭyamātaraḥ*. Ghosh, in a note ad 3.44, remarks that they do not occur in the Purāṇas and (ad 3.86) that their number is seven. I doubt the correctness of the latter statement as it seems impossible to fix their number, the divergence between the various lists obviously being due to metrical considerations[185]. As for the *nāṭyakumārīs* in 3.8 (variant reading *grāmādhidevatāḥ*), they seem to be different from the Mothers but, as far as I can see, no further information about them is available.

8. THE CONSECRATION OF THE THEATRE II

A second list of gods enumerated with reference to the system of classification also occurs in Chapter Three. The gods are here mentioned in connection with the drawing of lines on the floor of the stage, which characterize it as a replica of the cosmos, and with the placing of images of the gods in their appropriate places. The whole cosmological configuration might be called a *maṇḍala*, although the text reserves this term for the centre, which is denoted as "Brahmā's maṇḍala"[186].

The symbolical representation of the cosmos was performed by drawing two lines, which crossed in the centre[187]. In this way four main divisions

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[184] Cf. Ghosh, Text, Vol. I, Introduction p. lxxv, who, in addition to this passage, refers to 34.98, 35.56.

[185] In 3.86b–87a *siddhi* is not personified, as she is in 5a (cf. also 3.63 *diśantu siddhim*) but other names are added: *Sarasvatī Dhṛtir Medhā Hrīḥ Śrīr Lakṣmīr Matiḥ Smṛtiḥ, pāntu vo mātaraḥ sarvāḥ siddhidāś ca bhavantu vaḥ*. While here both *Dhṛti* and *Smṛti* occur, 3.5 has only *Dhṛti* (B KM Ragh., v. l. *Smṛti* C). Smṛti is also lacking in 3.51f. *devadevi mahābhāge Sarasvati haripriye, pragṛhyatāṁ balir mātar mayā bhaktyā samarpitaḥ* (52) *Lakṣmīḥ Siddhir Matir Medhā sarvalokanamaskṛtāḥ, mantrapūtam imaṁ devyaḥ pratigṛhṇantu me balim*. In 3.66 the name *Brāhmī* occurs for Sarasvatī: *namo 'stu nāṭyamātṛbhyo brāhmyādibhyo namo namaḥ*. In 3.24, where *Śraddhā* is added, the same group must be meant: *Sarasvatī ca Lakṣmīś ca Śraddhā Medhā ca pūrvataḥ*. Without specification the group is mentioned in 3.44 (consecration of the *mattavāraṇī*) *nāṭyasya ca tathā mātṝr Dhanadaṁ ca sahānugaiḥ* and in 3.29 *uttarasyāṁ diśi tathā Dhanadaṁ saṁniveśayet, nāṭyasya mātṝś ca tathā Yakṣān atha saguhyakān* (KM). The last word (v. l. *sahānugān*) is at variance with 3.26, where the Guhyakas, along with the Pitaras, Piśācas and Uragas, are located in the South.

[186] 5.74 *brāhme 'tha maṇḍale*.

[187] 3.22 *madhye caivā 'tra kartavye dve rekhe tiryagūrdhvage, tayoḥ kakṣyāvibhāgena daivatāni niveśayet*. Mankad's discussion of the *kakṣyāvibhāga* (Ancient Indian Theatre, Vallabh, Vidyanagar 1950, p. 21f.) does not lead to a convincing result.

(*kakṣyā*) were formed. Since the theatre was facing West, the stage facing East [188], the lines were no doubt drawn in the direction West-East (along the longitudinal axis of the theatre) and North-South and thus pointed to the four quarters. The four corners of the stage accordingly represented the intermediate points of the compass (*pradiśaḥ* or *vidiśaḥ* 1.83). In these divisions of the stage the gods are placed as follows (3.20ff. *devatānāṁ niveśanam*):

Centre: Brahmā seated on a lotus (23a).

East: Bhagavān Bhavaḥ (Śiva) with his bhūtagaṇas (23b), Nārāyaṇa, Mahendra, Skanda, Arka (or Sūrya, variant reading in B KM Raghuv.), the Aśvins, Śaśin; further Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī, Śraddhā, Medhā.

Of these gods Śiva, Viṣṇu and Skanda occupy the second, third and fourth joints of the bamboo *jarjara*, as gods of the centre. The first two are also mentioned apart, together with Brahmā, in the *pūrvaraṅga*, where the *sūtradhāra*, after turning round and saluting the gods of the four cardinal points (5.95–97), greets them: "Thereupon the *sūtradhāra*, with his face towards the audience, should perform the salutation of Rudra, Brahmā and Upendra" (5.98f.). On the other hand, Indra has from early times been located in the East (cf. 5.95). For the addition of Sun, Moon and the Aśvins I know no parallels. Although the female deities are no doubt the *nāṭyamātaraḥ* (see n. 185), they are also separately mentioned as a group in the North.

South-East: Vahni, Svāhā, Viśvedevāḥ, Gandharvas, Rudras and Serpents (?) [189].

South: Yama, Mitra sānuga, Pitaras, Piśācas, Serpents (*uragāḥ*), Guhyakas. On the location of Mitra in the South see below. It is doubtful if *uragāḥ* can be taken to prove that the reading *sarpagaṇāḥ* (see n. 189) is corrupt. The Guhyakas recur in 3.29, where they are located in the North.

South-West: Rākṣasas, Bhūtas (27a).

West: the *samudras* and Varuṇa "*Yādasāṁ patiḥ*" (27b).

North-West: *saptavāyus*, Garuḍa with the birds (28ab).

North: Dhanada, *nāṭyasya mātaraḥ*, Yakṣas and (v. l.) Guhyakas (29). As we have seen, the last group is also mentioned in 26b (South), and four of the *nāṭyamātaraḥ* also occur separately in 24b (East).

North-East: Nandin, etc., Gaṇeśvaras, Brahmarṣis, Bhūtasaṁghas. The last group occurs as *bhūtagaṇāḥ* in 23b (East). For the problem of the *bhūtas* in general see n. 178.

This elaborate list differs from the short traditional group of *lokapālas* (1.83) as found in 5.95–97 (E.: Śakra, S.: Yama, W.: Varuṇa and N.: Dhanada). The most remarkable detail, however, is that Mitra, along with Yama, is located in the South. This combination is characteristic of the

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[188] See IIJ. 16, p. 266ff.

[189] 3.25 *sarpagaṇāḥ* B Raghuv., *sarvagaṇāḥ* KM, *ca ṛṣayaḥ* C.

third chapter, where it occurs thrice[190], with the only exception of 3.6a, where Mitra is mentioned conjointly with Agni (cf. Mitra, Varuṇa and Agni in 1.84a)[191]. They are always referred to in the fixed order *Yamo Mitraś ca (-as tu)*, *Yamamitrau*. For the author of this chapter they seem to have been a kind of dual deity but none of the handbooks of epic and classical mythology which I consulted nor Gonda's recent books on Mitra and the dual deities[192] make mention of this group. Since in the Vedic system of classification Mitra, as an Āditya, belongs to the West, the association with Yama is hard to explain. The Vedic dual deity *Mitrá-Váruṇā* had in any case long since ceased to exist. As late as the epic, however, Mitra had retained some traces of his ancient function of deliverer[193]—a function which, as far as I can see, has not been refuted by Gonda[194]. In the Rigvedic period Varuṇa and Yama ruled over the realm of the dead but in later Vedic literature Varuṇa, although still associated with the notion of death, lost the specific function of King of the dead, which then became the function of Yama alone. The question may be considered whether in *Yama-Mitrau* the former of the gods stands for Varuṇa in his Rigvedic function, the dvandva in a way continuing Vedic *Mitrá-Váruṇā*. In my opinion the basic contrast between these Vedic gods was that of a binding and a delivering god. Yama, who is armed with the noose (*pāśa*) that originally characterized Varuṇa, is clearly the binding god. As for Mitra, his connection with defecation (e.g. Mhbh. XII.301.2, XIV.42.34) cannot be explained as a later development of a god who in classical literature does not seem to have been much more than a reminiscence of the Vedic period. In the Veda an idea more or less akin to this can perhaps be found in MS. III.10.6 (138,8), where it is said that by turning round the intestines (? *gudá*) of the sacrificial animal one kills people by constipation (*udāvartá*), for *gudá* is equal to the "vital airs" (*prāṇáḥ*) (III.10.4: 135,3 etc. *prāṇá vaí gudáḥ*) and *prāṇā-'pānaú* are equated to Mitra and Varuṇa. The turning round (cf. TS. VI.4.1.1) must imply the idea of producing the Vāruṇic aspect of these dual entities. However that may be, the three passages in Chapter III, isolated as they are, provide no basis for further speculations.

As for Varuṇa, it may be added that although his role in religion, as reflected by the Nāṭyaśāstra, was seemingly reduced to that of *lokapāla* of the West (3.27, 5.96) and god of the oceans[195], yet he had not, no

[190] See 3.26 *dakṣiṇena niveśyas tu Yamo Mitras tu sānugaḥ*, 38 *Yamamitrau samabhyarcyau apūpair modakais tathā, pit-n piśācān uragān sarpiḥkṣīreṇa tarpayet*, 61 *Yamo Mitraś ca bhagavān īśvarau lokapūjitau* (62) *imaṁ me pratigṛhṇītām baliṁ mantrapuraskṛtam, rasātalacarebhyas tu pannagebhyo namo namaḥ*.

[191] *nepathyabhūmau Mitras tu nikṣipto Varuṇo 'mbare* (cf. 85, which mentions *Ādityāś caiva Rudrāś ca*).

[192] See The Vedic God Mitra (Leiden 1972) and my remarks in IIJ. 15, p. 232, and cf. the same author, The dual deities in the religion of the Veda (1974).

[193] See IIJ. 5, p. 51.

[194] See J. Gonda (see n. 192) and my remarks in IIJ. 15, p. 227.

[195] 3.63 *sarvāmbhasāṁ patir devo Varuṇo haṁsavāhanaḥ*. The last epithet corresponds to the classical iconography. Cf. also his title *Yādasāṁ patiḥ* (3.27), which is quite common in the epic.

more than in the epics, lost his inauspicious character. (See below). It can hardly be merely accidental that when during the consecration of the play-house the *bali* is offered to the various gods, the formula for offering it to Varuṇa is completely different from the other formulas. Whereas in almost all other cases the formula is "accept this offering" (*pratigṛhṇātu me balim, pragṛhyatām eṣa baliḥ, pragṛhyatāṁ balir deva*) a special formula is used in addressing the serpents and Varuṇa (3.62–64): "Homage to the serpents who live in the nether world (*rasātala*)! May they who live on the air, now that they have been worshipped, bestow success on the play! May the lord of all waters, God Varuṇa, who has a goose for his *vāhana*, be propitious (*prītimant*), along with the oceans, streams and rivers, now that he has been worshipped" [196].

9. THE ROLE OF THE JARJARA IN THE CONSECRATION

The details of the ceremony of the consecration leave no doubt that the stage (*raṅgapīṭha*) was considered a sacred space, which symbolically represented the cosmos. It is impossible to ascertain how much of these ceremonies and the underlying religious notions had survived up to the time of Kālidāsa and the classical drama, but it is clear that the consecration was based on old traditions. This is apparent from the fact that the god who is located in the centre of the stage is Brahmā [197]. Several scholars have already surmised that in an early phase of Indian culture the worship of Brahmā must have been more important than may be inferred from the classical evidence [198]. The data of the Nāṭyaśāstra are the more interesting because most chapters of this text must have been composed by one or more Śivaites, and even in the third chapter Śiva is once mentioned first, even before Brahmā [199]. It must have been an old and very strong tradition which in spite of Śivaite sectarianism of the author(s) maintained itself in Chapters One and Three of our text.

In this connection the curious contradiction between NŚ. 1.19–20 and 4.5 is particularly interesting. In the former passage Brahmā is the supreme

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[196] *rasātalacarebhyas tu pannagebhyo namo namaḥ* (63) *diśantu siddhiṁ nāṭyasya pūjitāḥ pavanāśanāḥ, sarvāmbhasāṁ patir devo Varuṇo haṁsavāhanaḥ* (64) *pūjitaḥ prītimān astu sasamudranadīnadaḥ.*

[197] 3.23 *padmopaviṣṭaṁ Brahmāṇaṁ tasya madhye niveśayet*, 5.74 *brāhme 'tha maṇḍale*, which is followed by a spurious line *raṅgapīṭhasya madhye tu svayaṁ Brahmā pratiṣṭhitaḥ*. This is lacking in some manuscripts. It may be a later addition (based upon 3.23?), dating from a time when the term *brāhma maṇḍala* was no longer understood (but see n. 227 !). See also Feistel, Das Vorspiel auf dem Theater, p. 55.

[198] Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann, Les enseignements iconographiques de l'Agni Purāṇa, p. 119 and D. Seyfort Ruegg, IIJ. 8, p. 226, who refers to recent studies by Hacker. T. Bhattacharya's book The Cult of Brahma (Patna, 1957) was inaccessible to me.

[199] 3.4 *namaskṛtya mahādevaṁ sarvalokeśvaraṁ Bhavam, padmayoniṁ suragurum Viṣṇum Indraṁ Guhaṁ tathā*, see above p. 153. Cf. 1.1 *praṇamya śirasā devau pitāmahamaheśvarau* and 3.23 *padmopaviṣṭaṁ Brahmāṇaṁ tasya madhye niveśayet, ādau niveśyo bhagavān sārdhaṁ bhūtagaṇair Bhavaḥ*, 3.46–47 (mantras addressed to Brahmā, Śiva, Viṣṇu), 5.99 *Rudrabrahmopendrābhivandanam*, 100–101 *vandeta pauruṣeṇe 'śaṁ strīpadena Janārdanam, napuṁsakapadenā 'pi tathaivā 'mbuja-saṁbhavam.*

god, whose authority is not challenged and who, after creating the drama as a special *genre*, asks Indra to perform it with the other gods (which Indra declines). In 4.5, on the other hand, Brahmā composes the *samavakāra Amṛtamanthana* [200] and after having respectfully paid obeisance to Śiva, orders it to be performed for that god on the Himālaya. Thereupon Brahmā asks Śiva graciously to act as an instructor in the *aṅgahāras* ("limb-movements, major dance figures"), cf. 4.16ff. That the *naṭarāja* Śiva [201] should teach the dance figures is not surprising, although their optional character (4.16) suggests the conclusion that they do not belong to the older type of performance but are a later addition to it. The main point, however, which has been overlooked by Ghosh as well as by Kane [202], is the fundamentally different character of Chapter One, where (apart from the *maṅgalaśloka* 1.1 see n. 202) Śiva is only one among the devas, a dancer (1.45), who confers success (1.60 *siddhi*) and is the protector of all the characters save the three chief ones (1.96). The only "supreme deities" in this chapter are Brahmā and Indra. The circumstance that the dramatic performance is here connected with the latter's banner festival (*dhvajamaha*) is no satisfactory explanation for Śiva's subordinate position in this chapter. In comparison with the archaic character of the first chapter, the Śivaite tradition of the fourth chapter seems clearly to reflect a later cultural stage (cf. Śāradātanaya p. 285, 6–12!). In its first four lines, it is true, no conclusive indications for this assumption can be found but nothing compels us to assign them to a different author.

As for the consecration of a new playhouse as described in ch. III, the principal objects of worship are here Brahmā and the *jarjara*. This conclusion, which follows from the preceding analysis, is confirmed by the ritual of the *pūrvaraṅga*, which is a kind of worship of the stage (*raṅgapūjana*) [203]. The identity of the *jarjara* and Indra's "banner" (*dhvaja*) is clearly stated in 1.69 and 73. It must be observed in this connection that from a purely text-critical point of view it might be argued that in the text as we have it 1.58–63 and 67–76a are interpolations. Even if this is true, there are no indications to show that the interpolations are of a much later date than the rest of the text.

It is one of the indications of the archaic character of the first chapter that here the Indra festival is still represented as a celebration of the

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[200] See below, p. 195.

[201] Cf. 1.45 *Nīlakaṇṭhasya nṛtyataḥ.*

[202] See Ghosh's remarks in his text edition I², pp. LXXV, LXXVII, Translation I², p. XLIX, and P. V. Kane, History of Sanskrit Poetics (⁴1971, ⁵1973), pp. 20 and 22, according to whom the first chapter, probably even the first five chapters are of later date, added some centuries before the fifth century A.D. That the Nāṭyaśāstra is the work of different authors is also Ghosh's opinion, cf. Translation I², p. XXVII. As for the *maṅgalaśloka* (NŚ. 1.1), this is in all likelihood a later addition. Christopher Byrski's theory that Maheśvara here denotes Indra (Festschrift Sluszkiewicz, p. 57ff., and Concept of Ancient Indian Theatre, pp. 24–26) has not convinced me.

[203] See "The worship of the *jarjara* on the stage", IIJ. 16 (1974), p. 241ff.

god's victory over the Asuras[204], although the cosmogonical nature of this victory seems no longer to have been recognized. This is particularly instructive when it is compared with such late Vedic texts as Kauśika Sūtra 140 and Atharvaveda Pariśiṣṭa 19, which characterize the festival in a purely ritual way as "a royal rite for the benefit of the king's welfare and superiority in war"[205].

It is obvious that the older meaning of a ritual can easily be obliterated or re-interpreted in later times. In Europe the tree of life that was erected about the winter solstice to promote (as we may assume) the resurrection of life and the return of sunlight has been accepted by means of an *interpretatio christiana* as Christmas tree and can be seen inside Christian churches. The Maypole, however, continues to belong to folklore and in a village in Limburg (The Netherlands), for instance, it is every year carried into the village and erected outside, but by the side of the Roman Catholic church, where it is left standing for the rest of the year. Folklore and religion thus remain separate domains in the life of the community.

In India poles were erected on various occasions. Although they do not bear Indra's name, their character is so much similar to that of the *Indradhvaja* that they may be mentioned in this connection. Temporary posts were annually erected in the month of Mārga (c. November), when agriculturists put a post adorned with flags on their fields to protect the crops[206] and the cattle-breeders made a *Mārgapālī* for the lustration of the animals[207]. Non-temporary posts were, e.g., the banner on top of the

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[204] See 1.55 *tasmin dhvajamahe nihatāsuradānave*.

[205] Cf. J. Gonda, "The Indra festival according to the Atharvavedins", JAOS. 87 (1967), pp. 413–429. The words quoted occur on p. 414. See also p. 423. While there is admittedly no point in speculating about the prehistory, I cannot see any reason for doubting that the Indian banner festival has always been associated with Indra (cf. Gonda, pp. 416, 418). For the description in later texts see J. J. Meyer, Trilogie altindischer Mächte und Feste der Vegetation (Leipzig-Zürich 1937), pt III (to which references to the classical Tamil literature, such as Cilappatikāram 3.119ff. [cf. 28.98ff.], 144, Maṇimēkalai 1.7.8 should be added). For festivals in Western Bengal and Nepal see the references given by Meyer, III, p. 196 and Gonda, p. 413 n. 4. An eye-witness's account of the ceremony in modern Nepal has been given by A. A. Bake in a paper "Het feest van de rode en de witte Matsyendranath in Patan en Kathmandu", read in the Royal Dutch Academy in 1959 (see Jaarboek der Kon. Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen 1959–1960, p. 148). As far as I know, it has never been published. Mr. John Irwin informed me about celebrations of the festival in other parts of North India and according to Dr. Michael Witzel the *Indrajātra* in Nepal (in September) is the usual time for dramatic performances (letter 21.1.1977).

[206] See the data in the Kṛṣiparāśara about the *medhi vaijayantīsamāyukta*, discussed in IIJ. 11, p. 214f. The word *vaijayantī* may be a direct reference to Indra, as J. J. Meyer, op. c., III p. 4 n. 1 suggests. The word for erecting is here *āropayati*, which is also, but rarely, used with reference to the Indra pole, cf. Agnipurāṇa 102.8. In Cilappatikāram 3.119 the staff is said to represent Indra's son Jayanta: *intira-ciṟuvaṉ cayantaṉ āk eṉa*. Cf. Skt. *jayanta* "flag".

[207] Meyer, op. c. II, pp. 160–174.

chariot of a warrior, which was to guarantee his life and victoriousness [208], and the "pinnacle" erected on *stūpas* [209] and theatre buildings [210].

As for the Nāṭyaśāstra the *dhvaja* itself, although associated with Indra, had lost its character of world tree and had been attributed, as Indra's weapon, the function of the Vedic *vajra*. Indra, indeed, uses the *dhvaja* to dispel his enemies and on the other hand the *vajra* is said to reside in the *jarjara* [211]. Therefore the main function of the *jarjara* is said to be the dispelling and destroying of the "obstacles" which might disturb the performance (cf. 5.83 *jarjaro vighnajarjaraḥ*). It is addressed as "weapon of the great Indra" [212], which is a reminiscence of the mythical tale of the first chapter, where Indra is said to have driven away the "obstacles" (1.69) and the Asuras and Dānavas, and to have given his *dhvaja* as a present to the actors to protect them (1.59). But in the same verse 3.12 it is also said to have been created by all the gods [213] and to be worshipped as a sacred object in its own right [214].

It follows that the pole could be erected with various intentions. The aim of the rite was different according as to whether it was performed on the stage, in the fields or in the town, when the main concern was the king's welfare and victoriousness. The relative chronology of our sources, therefore, is of minor importance in this respect and it would be wrong to think that the "original" meaning of the rite is best preserved in the earliest texts. When it was performed with a view to the welfare and prosperity of the whole country, it was natural that the king, in whose person they were concentrated, was mentioned first of all, and success of the king almost automatically meant victoriousness. This is true, not only of the two Atharvavedic texts, the importance of whose testimonies can easily be overrated unless they are carefully interpreted in their particular contexts, but also of the Nāṭyaśāstra. The prayer in NŚ. 3.11–13 "for the success of the performance" [215] ends with the words: "Do thou announce victory to the king and defeat to his enemies, welfare of cows and brāhmins and success (*vivardhana*) of the drama" [216]. The

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[208] *jayāspada*. See IIJ. 11, p. 154ff. This banner was called *dhvajayaṣṭi*, *ketu* or *ketana* in the epic.

[209] The *stūpayaṣṭi*, see Avadānaśataka, p. 387, 10–11.

[210] For this *stūpī* (*stūpi*), Tamil *tāḻika-k-kuṭam* see Clifford R. Jones, JAOS. 93 (1973), p. 294. For the *stūpikīla* see Mānasāra 18.169ff.

[211] 1.91 *jarjare caiva nikṣiptaṁ vajraṁ daityanibarhaṇam* and 3.78 *vajrasāraḥ* (see n. 221).

[212] Cf. 3.12 *mahendrapraharaṇam*. For Mahendra see Hillebrandt, Vedische Mythologie II², p. 190f.

[213] See 3.12 *nirmitaṁ sarvadevaiś ca sarvavighnanibarhaṇam* and cf. 3.77 *vighnajarjaraṇārthaṁ tu jarjaraṁ cā 'bhimantrayet, vighnānāṁ śamanārthaṁ hi devair brahmapurogamaiḥ* (78) *nirmitas tvaṁ mahāvīryo vajrasāro mahātanuḥ* and 3.80 *nityaṁ sarve hi pāntu tvāṁ surās tvaṁ ca śivo bhava*.

[214] *pūjā*, see 3.11 and 73–77 and 5.102 *pūjanaṁ jarjarasya*.

[215] 3.11 *nāṭyaprasiddhaye*.

[216] *nṛpasya vijayaṁ śaṁsa ripūṇāṁ ca parājayam, gobrāhmaṇaśivaṁ caiva nāṭyasya ca vivardhanam*.

military aspect, which is expressed in the word *jaya* "victory", and which also accounts for the function of banners on war-chariots, is only a special facet of the more comprehensive notion of "good fortune, success". It occurs in conjunction with "victory" in, e.g., 3.80f. Here the *jarjara* is addressed as follows: "do thou give victory and success to our king" [217]. Protection of the crops [218] (for which J. J. Meyer's description in terms of a fertility cult is not fully adequate, unless it is seen in the light of the cosmogonical prototype) is yet another aspect of the same function, which is ultimately founded on the role of the world pillar in the cosmogony.

At the same time, however, we are here faced with the problem which has already been touched upon above (see p. 42, n. 135). Indra's erecting of the cosmic pillar has its particular place in the cosmogony, and in the few days at the beginning of the new year (Mhbh. I.57.18 *gate saṁvatsare*) Indra, as a seasonal god, repeats his act and is temporarily considered identical with his pole. During the rest of the year, however, the gods of the totality are considered to be connected with it and residing in it. The same is true of the *jarjara*. Although it is Indra's weapon, the gods who reside in its five joints are, from top to bottom, Brahmā, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Skanda and the three Mahānāgas, viz. Śeṣa, Vāsuki and Takṣaka [219].

It has already been pointed out above [220] that Indra's absence from the *jarjara* is due to his character of a seasonal god. His relation to, and identity with, the cosmic tree was restricted to the few days when the renovation of the world was celebrated by the erection of the *Indradhvaja*. After that period Indra reassumed his normal function of *lokapāla* of the East. The statement of the Nāṭyaśāstra that Indra's *vajra* is present in the *jarjara* [221] concerns the general character of the *jarjara* as the protector of the stage against disturbing powers (*vighnas*). In contrast with the gods who reside in the various joints the *vajra* has no special place because it is functionally identical with the *jarjara* as a whole. As far as I can see, this is not a characteristic of the world axis or the *indradhvaja* in general but only an aspect of the *jarjara* on the stage.

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[217] 3.80 *nakṣatre 'bhijite śreṣṭhe jātas tvaṁ ripusūdanaḥ* (81) *jayaṁ cā 'bhyudayaṁ caiva pārthivasya prayaccha naḥ*. For the importance of Abhijit see Hillebrandt, Romanische Forschungen 5 (1889–90), p. 301.

[218] For the *medhī* see above n. 206.

[219] See 1.92f. *śiraḥparvā 'sthito Brahmā dvitīye Śaṁkaras tathā, tṛtīye ca sthito Viṣṇuś caturthe Skanda eva ca* (93) *pañcame ca mahānāgāḥ Śeṣavāsukitakṣakāḥ*, 3.78f. *śiras te rakṣatu Brahmā sarvadevagaṇaiḥ saha* (79) *dvitīyaṁ ca Haraḥ parva tṛtīyaṁ ca Janārdanaḥ, caturthaṁ ca Kumāraś ca pañcamaṁ pannagottamāḥ* (*-ottamaḥ* C.). Cf. the similar cosmic symbolism with regard to the sacrificial stake in TS. VI.3.4.7, ŚB. IV.4.13 (see IIJ. 16, p. 248 n. 43 and p. 259 n. 80).

[220] See p. 140 and cf. IIJ, 16 (1974), p. 252.

[221] See 1.91 *jarjare caiva nikṣiptaṁ vajraṁ daityanibarhaṇam, tatparvasu vinikṣiptāḥ surendrā hy amitaujasaḥ*. Cf. 3.78 *nirmitas tvaṁ mahāvīryo vajrasāro mahātanuḥ*, which is, however, ambiguous: either there is an intentional *double entendre* or it may simply mean "hard as adamant" (Ghosh).

The archaic character of the role of the *jarjara* on the stage is particularly apparent in connection with the ceremonies which conclude the consecration of the playhouse as described in the third chapter.

After the consecration of the *jarjara* (NŚ. 3.73–81) ghee is poured into the sacrificial fire (*homa*) and then the king, the female dancers and the musical instruments (*ātodya*) are purified (*mārj-*) or illuminated (*abhidyotayati*) with torches, lit (in the sacrificial fire) in order to enhance their brilliance (*dīpti*). They are then sprinkled with water that has been purified with *mantras* "for the happiness and well-being (*bhūti*) of the king" and a benediction is uttered for the success of the performances (3.81–87).

From this passage it may be inferred that the consecration of a new theatre took place immediately before the first performance, at the moment when the king (probably as the *prekṣāpati*)[222] and the audience were already present. The technical term *adhivāsanaṁ veśmanaḥ*[223] describes its function correctly, for *adhivāsana* denoted "the preliminary consecration of an image, its invocation and worship by suitable *mantras*, etc. before the commencement of a sacrifice"[224]. This implies, however, that it was immediately followed by the *pūrvaraṅga*, which in some respects was a doubling of the consecration (it also comprised a *pūjā* to the *jarjara*, NŚ. 5.102f.), although its main purpose was different. It seems doubtful that in such cases the ritual of the *pūrvaraṅga* was performed *in toto*.

The end of the consecration is particularly instructive. It consists of three consecutive acts:

a) the first act: the breaking of the jar (kumbha).

The jar used in this ritual is different from the golden pitcher (*bhṛṅgāra*), which is used in the *pūrvaraṅga* for ritual purification (5.81) and elsewhere in connection with the pole festival[225]. For the purpose of this ritual an earthen jar is used, which is filled with water and adorned with a garland of leaves. After having placed it in the middle of the stage the *nāṭyācārya* puts a piece of gold in it[226], which may indicate that the earthen jar stands for a gold one. The place where the jar is put down (the *raṅgamadhya*) is the point of intersection of the two lines (East-West and North-South), which have been drawn on the floor of the stage. It is the centre of

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[222] See above, p. 123.

[223] Cf. 3.2 *tato 'dhivāsayed veśma raṅgapīṭhaṁ tathaiva ca, mantrapūtena toyena prokṣitāṅgo niśāgame*. Abhinavagupta has the following comment: *adhivāsayed iti: devatā maṇḍapam adhivasanty, āgacchanti. nāṭyācāryo dharma (ryakṛtam upari)tanadevatopanimantraṇam adhivāsanaṁ veśmanaḥ . . . vaded iti sambandhaḥ*. The reading *nāṭyācāryakṛtam* is apparently an emendation of the editors of the Baroda edition.

[224] See Apte, The practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary, s.v.

[225] See Cilappatikāram 3.121 *puṉṉiya naṉṉīr poṟkuṭatt' ēnti*.

[226] 3.71 *kumbhaṁ salilapūrṇaṁ ca parṇamālāpuraskṛtam* (72) *sthāpayed raṅgamadhye tu suvarṇaṁ cātra dāpayet*. The *parṇamālā* is also referred to in 2.54. For the (usual) meaning of *puraskṛta* ("accompanied by, with") see, e.g., 3.87. The translation "with a garland of leaves in its front" (Ghosh) is no doubt incorrect.

the stage, which is known as the *brāhma maṇḍala*. According to Abhinavagupta a lotus, symbolizing Brahmā, used to be drawn at this point[227]. Under it another piece of gold had been buried in the ground when the theatre was built[228]. Ever since the brāhmaṇas, gold was considered a symbol of life[229] and the notion of a golden pitcher in the nether world as the receptacle of *amṛta*, the life-giving substance, was well-known in the Veda[230].

The ritual of breaking the jar must be performed with great care (*prayatnataḥ*), for much depends on it. Should the *nāṭyācārya* fail to break it, then the king would be menaced by danger from his enemies. On the other hand, if the director succeeds, the king can be sure of destroying his rivals[231]. It is clear that the author of this chapter considered the ritual a beneficial act. That it was in origin a mere analogical magic, the smashing of the jar symbolizing the crushing of the enemies, is improbable for several reasons. The jar, filled with water and adorned with leaves, is clearly a *pūrṇakumbha* or *pūrṇaghaṭa*[232], also called a *maṅgalakalaśa*[233].

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[227] 3.22 (see n. 187) and 23 *padmopaviṣṭaṁ Brahmāṇaṁ tasya madhye niveśayet.* From Abhinavagupta's commentary on the last line (ed. Baroda I², p. 74 line 5), viz. *padmopaviṣṭam iti: madhye padmaṁ kāryam iti* it might be inferred that at his time the symbolism of the centre of the stage and ritual acts connected with it were still known (against the suggestion made above in n. 197). Other data, however, point to the conclusion that about 1000 A.D. the whole *pūrvaraṅga* was skipped or performed, as far as the *nāndī* was concerned, behind the scenes. Cf. also Raṅganātha (1665 A.D.) ad Kālid. Vikram. I.1.1 *alam ativistāreṇa: pratyāhārādi-nikhilapūrvaraṅgāṅgakaraṇe hi kathārambhotkaṇṭhitānām janānāṁ jāḍyatā syāt, atas tiṣṭhatv ayam etatprapañca 'iti bhāvaḥ.* It is possible, however, that the consecration of a new playhouse was still performed in the absence of the audience.

[228] Cf. 2.73 *ratnāni cā 'tra deyāni pūrvaṁ vajraṁ* (diamond) *vicakṣaṇaiḥ* (74) *vaidūryaṁ dakṣiṇe caiva sphaṭikaṁ paścime tathā, pravālam uttare caiva madhye tu kanakaṁ bhavet.*

[229] Cf. ŚB. V.2.1.20, 3.5.15, 4.1.14, VI.7.1.2; X.4.1.6, XII.8.1.22.

[230] See Hillebrandt, Vedische Mythologie, I², pp. 326, 437, Lüders, Varuṇa, p. 379, Kuiper, India Maior (Fs. Gonda), p. 148f.

[231] Cf. 3.88 *bhi(n)dyāt kumbhaṁ tataś caiva nāṭyācāryaḥ prayatnataḥ, abhinne tu bhavet kumbhe svāmino śatruto bhayam* (89) *bhinne caiva tu vijñeyaḥ svāminaḥ śatrusaṁkṣayaḥ.* In this connection it is interesting to note that in the Rigveda Indra is said to have broken open the hill like a new (=unfired? J. J. Meyer, Trilogie III, p. 139) jar. Cf. X.89.7 *bibhéda girím návam ín ná kumbhám, á gắ índro akṛṇuta svayúgbhiḥ*).

[232] For the *pūrṇakumbha* or *pūrṇaghaṭa, pūrṇakalaśa* see, e.g., A. K. Coomaraswamy, Yakṣas II (1931), p. 61f. (cf. ch. I, n. 327), Jeannine Auboyer, Le trône et son symbolisme dans l'Inde Ancienne (1957), pp. 84, 100f., Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann, Les enseignements iconographiques de l'Agnipurāṇa, p. 242f., S. Al-George et A. Roşu, "Pūrṇaghaṭa et le symbolisme du vase dans l'Inde", Arts Asiatiques 4 (1957), pp. 243–254, F. D. K. Bosch, The Golden Germ (1960), pp. 110–113, P. K. Agrawala, Pūrṇa Kalaśa or the Vase of Plenty (Varanasi, no date, 62 pp.). It is sometimes counted among the *aṣṭamaṅgalāni*, see von Hinüber, ZDMG. 1974, Supplement II, p. 361. Two of them were placed on the sides of the door, Kād. 68,4 *pūrṇakalaśādhiṣṭhitadvārapakṣake*, 96,14 *dvārāvasthitasitapūrṇakalaśam*, (Utt.) 281,4 *ubhayapārśvasthāpitotpallavamukhapūrṇahemakalaśam.*

[233] Mṛcch. IV.27.20 *cūda-pallava-lalāma-phaṭiha-maṅgalakalasābhirām-ohaa-pāssassa*

Therefore it is placed in the very centre of the stage. Mythologically this was the place where the golden *amṛta*-jar was hidden in the primordial hill, at the root of the world axis [234]. The piece of gold which, as we have seen, had been buried beneath this centre, must have symbolized this world of potential life. According to Rigvedic mythology there is under the earth (represented by the primordial hill) an ocean (*samudrá*) of cosmic waters [235]. Indra's demiurgic act consisted in making a hole (*khá*) in this hill so that the subterranean waters could stream down from the top of the hill in four directions [236].

That the earthen jar of the director is rightly equated to the cosmic jar or bucket under the earth is apparent from the fact that the director must crush the jar and that the prosperity of the king (and implicitly of his kingdom) is believed to depend on the water flowing from the jar. The *nāṭyācārya* thus repeats Indra's cosmogonic act. After the stage has been ritually converted into an image of the sacred world, its religious meaning is emphasized by a re-enactment of the "second creation" [237].

A golden pitcher (*bhṛṅgāra*) is also one of the main paraphernalia (*upakaraṇa*) used by the actors in the ritual ceremonies which precede the dramatic performance. The fact that this pitcher is said to have been the present given by Varuṇa to Bharata's sons after their legendary first performance of a play supports our thesis that it symbolizes the subterranean jar [238]. In the *pūrvaraṅga* it is used to pour out water on the director immediately before he is to erect the bamboo staff. Although the Nāṭyaśāstra describes this rite in terms of ablution and sipping of water [239], it is possible that originally here, too, the act of pouring out was the most important aspect (see p. 168).

Mythologically the opening of the hill was immediately followed by the rising of the world axis. It is not surprising, when viewed in this mythological context, that the two main paraphernalia of the actors were the golden pitcher and the bamboo staff. The more remarkable, therefore, is the fact that the director, after breaking the jar, does not erect the bamboo staff in the centre of the stage. The *jarjara* is only mentioned twice in the third chapter, first when, as part of the "worship of the deities on the stage", a *pūjā* is offered to the staff (3.11–13) and secondly when it is consecrated for its use on the stage (3.73–81). It has not,

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. . . *vasantaseṇā-bhavaṇa-duārassa*, Kād. 68.7 *śirobhāgavinyastadhavalanidrāmaṅgala-kalaśam*, 178,13 *saptalokanidrāmaṅgalakalaśe*, Gītagov. 12.18 (II.1) with comm.: *maṅgalārthakalaśo hi payaḥpūrṇo bhavati sunīlāmrapallavair upacitaś ca.*

[234] For the *amṛta*-jar at the root of the world tree see, e.g., E. B. Havell, A Handbook of Indian Art (1920-27), p. 43, F. D. K. Bosch, The Golden Germ (1960), pp. 110–113, 156f. (and the plates), and cf. above, ch. I, n. 327.

[235] *samudrá*=*ápaḥ*, see RS. VI.69.6 (cf. India Maior p. 149) and cf. IIJ. 8, p. 125.

[236] See, e.g., Lüders, Varuṇa p. 284ff., B. H. Kapadia, Purāṇam 4 (1962), pp. 146–153. Cf. India Maior p. 148 (with further references).

[237] For the "second creation" see History of Religions 10 (1970), p. 104ff., 117, Renou, EVP. 16, p. 169.

[238] For Varuṇa and the *kumbha* see above, p. 147.

[239] *śauca* and *ācamana* (5.81).

however, a fixed place assigned to it in the "installation of the gods" (3.20–32). As will be shown in the next section, the staff was only temporarily erected in the *pūrvaraṅga* and for that purpose it had to be consecrated as a sacred object during the consecration of the theatre.

b) the second act: the illumination of the stage (3.89–91).

The director now takes fearlessly[240] a burning lamp to illuminate the stage[241]. With a roaring sound and snapping of the fingers he places the lamp with much noise in the centre of the stage[242]. In this description three points are significant. First, the illumination takes place immediately after the breaking of the jar; second, the lamp is placed in the centre, and third, the illumination is accompanied by much ostentatious tumult (the technical term for which is *vidrava*). In the Rigveda the winning of Agni or, more specially, of the sun (*svàrṣāti*)[243] is a cosmogonical event which is entirely parallel to the winning of water. When viewed in the light of the preceding act, this rite must obviously be interpreted as an imitation of the first rising of the sun from the world mountain, which is the cosmic centre. In this respect, too, we are accordingly dealing with the enactment of an aspect of the "second creation". As for the roaring sound, however, no unambiguous explanation can be proposed. On the one hand it is reminiscent of the shouts that seem to have accompanied the "return" of the sun after the winter solstice[244]. On the other hand it reminds us of the legendary imitation on the stage of the primordial fight of gods and Daityas, which is said to have consisted of "altercation and tumult"[245].

c) the third act: the fight.

"Then one performs on the stage fights which are accompanied by the sound of conch-shells and drums, big drums (*mṛdaṅga*) and small ones (*paṇava*) and all kinds of instruments of percussion (*ātodya*). In these fights wounds which are struck, incised and gaping, with blood streaming from them . . . will portend success"[246]. The words *bhinna* and *chinna* in

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[240] 3.89 *nāṭyācāryo 'py apetabhīḥ* C (with the manuscripts *ṭha ma ta*). The variant reading *prayatnataḥ* (B KM Raghuv.) is a *lectio facilior*, which may have crept in from 88a *nāṭyācāryaḥ prayatnataḥ*.

[241] *raṅga* is not "auditorium" (Ghosh), since only the stage as a sacred space can be meant.

[242] 3.89b *bhinne kumbhe tataś caiva nāṭyācāryo 'py apetabhīḥ* (90) *pragṛhya dīpikāṁ dīptāṁ sarvaṁ raṅgaṁ pradīpayet, kṣveḍitaiḥ sphoṭitaiś caiva valgitaiś ca pradhāvitaiḥ* (v. l. *vipradhāvitaiḥ*) (91) *raṅgamadhye tu tāṁ dīptāṁ saśabdāṁ saṁprayojayet.*

[243] For *svàrṣāti* see the comments in IIJ. 4, p. 220, 5, p. 173.

[244] Cf. Chānd. Up. III.19.3 *ghoṣā ulūlavo* and see IIJ. 4, pp. 235, 272.

[245] 1.57 *tadante 'nukṛtir baddhā yathā Daityāḥ surair jitāḥ* (58) *saṁpheṭavidravakṛtā chedyabhedyāhavātmikā*, cf. 14.56C (13.54 KM), and 35.53 (26.28B, 35.20+, p. 654 line 1 KM) *yat tv āviddhāṅgahāraṁ tu* (*-antaṁ*) *chedyabhedyāhavātmakam* (*sattvā-viddha*-C) and 27.13B C *yac chedyabhedyāhavātmakam* (n. 328).

[246] 3.91 *śaṅkhadundubhinirghoṣair mṛdaṅgapaṇavais tathā* (92) *sarvātodyaiḥ praṇaditaiḥ raṅge yuddhāni kārayet, tatra bhinnaṁ ca cchinnaṁ ca dāritaṁ ca saśoṇitam* (93) *kṣataṁ pradīptam āyastaṁ nimittaṁ siddhilakṣaṇam*. B (3.92f.) has the same text but KM reads *raṅgayuddhāni* and has *kṛttaṁ* for *kṣataṁ*.

combination with *kṣveḍita* "roaring sound" of verse 90 exactly echo the word *chedyabhedyāhava* quoted in n. 245, where *āhava* means "challenging". This terminological parallelism is an indication that the fight on the stage, introduced by the illumination, is an "imitation" [247] of the cosmogonical fight between Devas and Asuras. Thus the consecration of the stage ended with three main aspects of the cosmogony. Only the *jarjara*, although ritually consecrated, was not actually erected. As we shall see below, this formed part of the ceremonies of the *pūrvaraṅga*.

Summing up it can be said that the end of the consecration was a drama in a nut-shell, for the legendary first dramatic performance is said to have also been a representation of the cosmogony (see p. 143). That there is also some kind of parallelism with the *pūrvaraṅga* is not surprising. The two ceremonies, however, are only partly parallel for, whereas the former aims at transforming the stage into a sacred place, the central meaning of the *pūrvaraṅga* lies in the ritual of the *jarjara*. There is a clear contrast, accordingly, between the consecration, which comprises a representation of the release of the waters, the birth of Agni and the fight between Devas and Asuras, and the *pūrvaraṅga*, which, although not entirely lacking the element of strife, concentrates upon the unity of the ordered world as personified by Brahmā. It is he, not Indra, who erects the *jarjara* and it is under his patronage that the verbal contest between the protagonists of the cosmic moieties takes place. This shows that the two rituals were basically different in character.

11. THE JARJARAPRAYOGA IN THE PŪRVARAṄGA

The "performance with the *jarjara*" is discussed in detail in ch. V, which deals with the *pūrvaraṅga*. The interpretation of the text, however, presents some difficulties and consequently opinions differ. Since these problems have been treated in detail elsewhere [248], this section will only briefly summarize those conclusions that are of interest in the context of this study.

The *pūrvaraṅga* is a religious act of high importance, which according to the Nāṭyaśāstra is equal to a sacrifice: 1.126 = 3.96. Cf. 3.93, 5.112 and 5.57 "The performance of the *pūrvaraṅga* is a religious (meritorious) act, which confers fame and long life and serves to please Daityas and Dānavas and all the gods". After playing music behind the curtain to appease the Daityas and Dānavas, the musicians enter the stage and make some music in praise of the gods.

The director (*sūtradhāra*) then enters accompanied by his two assistants, who carry in their hands the two paraphernalia (*upakaraṇa*), viz. the *jarjara* and the golden pitcher. As far as I can see, the following ritual cannot be understood unless the two assistants are taken to stand for

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[247] 1.57 *anukṛti* (see n. 245). In this way *anukṛti* and *anukaraṇa* (1.111, 121) became terms for the drama in general. Cf. Abhinavagupta (B I², p. 26 line 7) *anukṛtir iti nāṭyam* and Ghosh, Translation I², Introduction p. XXIX.

[248] See n. 203.

the divine world. If so, however, the two objects which they are carrying characterize them as Indra and Varuṇa, for we have seen above that the *upakaraṇas* are the legendary presents of these two gods. In that case the fact that these gods were chosen to represent the world of the gods reflects *Vedic* mythological thought since only in the Veda Indra and Varuṇa stood for the two cosmic moieties and thus represented the whole ordered world. Apart from the internal evidence of the ritual itself, an argument in favour of this interpretation of the character of the assistants is the fact that at the end of the *pūrvaraṅga* one of the assistants becomes the *vidūṣaka*, whose traditional make-up, as described in the Nāṭyaśāstra is remarkably similar to the outward appearance of the Vedic *jumbaká*, the human representative of Varuṇa in the Vedic ritual. As we shall see below, the *vidūṣaka* and the *nāyaka* were the only male characters who had a special divine protector, the *nāyaka* being Indra's *protégé*.

The *sūtradhāra*, who has flowers in his hands, goes between the two assistants. Since this fact is expressly stated in our text (5.70), it must have had a special meaning. This can only be understood if the two assistants actually represent (as was assumed above) the upper world and the nether world. If so, the *sūtradhāra*'s position between them characterizes him as a god of totality (see p. 176f.). It must be stressed in this connection that the *pūrvaraṅga* was a ritual and for that reason considered equal to a sacrifice. Hence the special meaning referred to above must have been a ritual meaning, and the *sūtradhāra* must consequently have impersonated god Brahmā. It then follows from the well-known symbolical meanings of "right" and "left" for "higher" and "lower" that (although the text does not say so) the assistant with the *jarjara* must have gone on his right and the *bhṛṅgāradhāra* on his left.

Although the *sūtradhāra* had entered the stage "with the wish to worship Brahmā" (5.71 *Brahmaṇo yajanecchayā*), it is characteristic that the word *pūjā* is nowhere used in this context: he throws his handful of flowers as a donation in the centre, which is dedicated to Brahmā[249] and then performs three salutations[250]. The normal "salutation" (*abhivādana*) consists of rising from one's seat, clasping the feet of the superior and mentioning the name of the person addressed and one's own. Here the

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[249] 5.74 *puṣpāñjalyapavargaś ca kāryo brāhme 'tha maṇḍale*. According to Sāgaranandin (c. 1200–1250) this ceremony is meant to avert evil: *raṅgeṣu puṣpaprakaraḥ kṛtaḥ svastyayanaṁ bhavet* (Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa 2185-263). A similar definition is sometimes given of the *pūrvaraṅga* in general, e.g. *vighnapraśāntaye* (see n. 254), Mālatīm. I.5.2 *suvihitāni raṅgamaṅgalāni*. Such definitions, which refer to the aim of the *pūrvaraṅga*, are not contradicted by those which describe its formal aspect as a *devārcanavidhi* (Sāgaranandin 2159-250). Cf. NŚ. 5.57 *sarvadaivatapūjārhaṁ sarvadaivatapūjanam* and below, n. 255, where the benediction of the world is described as *devastutisamāśrayā* "consisting in a praise of the gods". In the account given above the various dance steps are left out of consideration because their meaning is still, as far as I know, obscure. Each of them, however, had no doubt its own specific ritual meaning.

[250] 5.75 *abhivandyaḥ Pitāmahaḥ, abhivādanāni kāryāṇi trīṇi hastena bhūtale* (76) . . . *vandanābhinayāntakaḥ*.

text only specifies that, instead of clasping the feet (which is impossible), the *sūtradhāra* should, while kneeling in the centre, touch the ground thrice. The number three symbolizes the idea of totality associated with the centre.

The *sūtradhāra* then rises, leaves the *brāhma maṇḍala* in which he had made his salutations, makes a *pradakṣiṇa* around it and calls his assistant. Actually, as the situation indicates, both assistants must have been meant. The one who carries the golden pitcher (and who has been called according to the text) pours water from the pitcher on him. The text interprets this as an ablution and rinsing of the mouth. There is, however, some reason to doubt if ritual purification was actually the original meaning of this act, the more so as the *sūtradhāra* was already consecrated (*dīkṣita*) at the moment when he entered the stage. As has been pointed out above (p. 164), in the consecration of the playhouse the water streaming from the broken jar and portending happiness and prosperity for the king and his kingdom can be interpreted as a reiteration of the creation of the ordered world. Likewise the water poured out from the pitcher, symbol of Varuṇa's nether world, can, in view of the unmistakable cosmogonical meaning of the following ceremony, originally have had a mythological meaning different from the ritual interpretation given by the Nāṭyaśāstra.

Immediately after his purification the *sūtradhāra* seizes the *jarjara*, apparently from the hand of the other assistant. Muttering mantras the director performs particular steps. This part of the *pūrvaraṅga* ends with his taking five steps in the direction of the orchestra. Although the text does not specify how this "seizing of the *jarjara*" (*jarjaragrahaṇa*) was to be executed, it must have comprised the erecting of it. This appears from the fact that this first part of the *pūrvaraṅga* to be performed on the stage is called *Utthāpana*, which is the traditional term for erecting the Indra-pole, and further from the fact that the director later lowers the *jarjara*. At this moment he apparently erects it in his (right?) hand, which explains why preferably a bamboo staff was used for this purpose (23.172ff.)[251].

When entering the stage between his two assistants "with the wish to worship Brahmā", the *sūtradhāra* could be considered to be himself the god of the totality. Now that, after "greeting" god Brahmā, he stands in or near the *maṇḍala* in the centre of the stage, he must have impersonated Brahmā and the totality of the cosmos. He then turns round and "salutes" the four quarters with their *lokapālas* (1.83), viz. the east and Indra, the south and Yama, the west and Varuṇa, and the north with Dhanada (Kubera). An example of these salutations from a much later time is given by Sāgaranandin (c. 1200–1250), NLRK. 1134/118: "Accept my salutation, you gods, lords of the regions; come nearer, O illustrious ones, and protect my stage". Thereupon he performs with three steps, described as masculine, neuter and feminine, his "salutation" to the three gods of

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[251] However, also for the pole of Indra's banner festival a *veṇuyaṣṭi* was often used. See Meyer, Trilogie III, passim.

the centre Rudra, Brahmā and Viṣṇu. Since these gods also reside in the three upper joints of the *jarjara*, it remains uncertain just how they are "saluted": whether in the *maṇḍala* of the centre or in the bamboo staff. It has already been remarked above that nowhere in the description of the ritual the word *pūjā* is used. This term is reserved for the homage which is to be paid by the "fourth man" (*caturthakāra*). The conclusion seems warranted, therefore, that the *sūtradhāra* actually represents the divine world, and that he and his two attendants impersonate the gods Brahmā, Indra and Varuṇa.

In addition to the divine honours which the "fourth man" pays to the *sūtradhāra*, which will be discussed below, there are other indications which seem to confirm this conclusion. One of them is the curious way in which, according to the Handbook, the names of the author and the drama should be announced to the audience. Since this was a profane task, the *sūtradhāra* and his attendants leave the stage at the end of the *pūrvaraṅga* (5.166) and "The *sthāpaka*, who has the qualities and the outward appearance of the *sūtradhāra*, then enters" (5.167b). In the Diamond Jubilee Number of the Annals of the Bhandarkar Or. Res. Inst. (1978), p. 173ff. it has been pointed out that *sthāpaka* or *kāvyaprastāvaka* was the name of the *sūtradhāra* in his profane *function* (thus also Abhinavagupta), which explains why the *sthāpaka* has the same appearance as the *sūtradhāra*. In the classical drama, however, this form of prologue is entirely unknown and the interpretations of Dhanaṁjaya and other theorists, though usually taken as an accurate description of the earlier practice, must necessarily have been mere guess-work. As the *pūrvaraṅga* fell into disuse, the need was felt for a more elaborate introduction than the Prologue, which was only an interlude. Hence the conversation (*saṁlāpa*) was substituted for the Prologue. This talk of the *sūtradhāra* with his wife (*naṭī*) or an attendant was technically called *āmukha* (NŚ. 22.28) but in most dramas the name for the older prologue, *sthāpanā* (in the prologues of the "Bhāsa"-plays) or *prastāvanā*, was maintained, and the use of *prastāvanā* for *āmukha* was sanctioned by NŚ. 22.29 (possibly an early interpolation). It will be clear that the German term "Vorspiel auf dem Theater" is neither correct for the *pūrvaraṅga* as a whole, nor for the Prarocanā and the Prastāvanā, but only for the Āmukha.

After this digression, necessary to illustrate the *sūtradhāra's* sacred character in the *pūrvaraṅga*, we will now return to the ritual itself. What happens next is that a "fourth man" (*caturthakāra*), who is not ritually consecrated, enters the stage. His only task is to offer a *pūjā* of flowers to the *jarjara*, the orchestra and the sūtradhāra himself. It should be noted that this *pūjā* is entirely different in character from the preceding salutations. The *sūtradhāra* is treated as an equal of the bamboo staff and the orchestra (or: musical instruments), that is, as a divine being. It thus confirms the view taken above, that the *sūtradhāra*, when entering the stage with his two attendants, represented the world of the gods, and indirectly it may support the inference that he stands for Brahmā. The *pūjā* accentuates the character of the salutations given to the gods of

the four quarters and those of the centre. It is true that they formed part of a kind of consecration of the stage as an image of the divine world – a consecration which was prerequisite for the following ritual act. It must also be admitted that at the moment the *sūtradhāra* paid obeisance to the gods, including those of the centre, he at best represented a lower deity but he was not yet the highest god. However, after circumambulating the centre and seizing the *jarjara* he must have become god Brahmā, and the *pūjā* of the "fourth man" (apparently a representative of the human world) confirms his divine function. The text does not say just where he is standing at this moment but if it is not in the very middle, the *brāhma maṇḍala* (which would be the only legitimate place), it must have been quite near it.

It is now that the *sūtradhāra*/Brahmā pronounces his benediction (*nāndī*)[252]. In the oldest practice, accordingly, as it is described in the Nāṭyaśāstra[253], the *nāndī* was not the benedictory verse recited at the beginning of a dramatical performance but the most solemn part of the *pūrvaraṅga*. Its function is to appease all obstacles[254]. On hearing its sound, which is equal to that of the explanation of a Vedic mantra (36.26), evil spirits flee (36.25). It is a benediction[255] of the gods, the king, the cows and brahmins (5.108–112)[256]. Since the performance by the *sūtradhāra* culminates in this act, it becomes clear why such high demands are made upon his person (36.66–74): a man who was to bless "the whole world"[257] had to fulfil the highest requirements.

After the *nāndī* the *sūtradhāra* pronounces the *jarjaraśloka* (5.117f.) which is immediately followed by another śloka which accompanies the inclining of the *jarjara*. The two assistants then retreat to the back of the stage. Apparently the director has acted a banner festival with the bamboo staff in his hand, which he first raises (to his forehead? 9.78) and then inclines. As a result the following dramatic performance can be considered to take place just as in the legendary first performance (1.54), on the occasion of Indra's banner festival. After lowering the *jarjara*, the director holds (the lower part of) his left arm in a horizontal

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[252] For its importance see Bādarāyaṇa apud Sāgara 1092f.

[253] For the later practice see, e.g., S. Lévi, Le théâtre indien I, pp. 136, 379, II, pp. 27, 64, Kuiper (p. 169), pp. 179–182.

[254] Cf. Bādarāyaṇa *vighnapraśāntaye*, Sāgaranandin 1090-115 *sarvavighnapraśāntaye*. See n. 249.

[255] 5.24 *āśīrvacanasaṁyuktā* (cf. Sāgaranandin, NLRK. 1123-116, Sāh. D. 6.24, S. Lévi II, p. 24), 35.96 *āśīrvāda(na?)yuktair madhurair vākyaiś ca samaṅgalācāraiḥ, sarvaṁ stauti hi lokaṁ yasmāt tasmād bhaven nāndī*, Sāgaranandin, NLRK. 1095 *pradhānam aṅgaṁ pūrvaraṅge sūtradhāraprayojyadevastutisamāśrayā āśīrvacanātmikā dvādaśapadā aṣṭapadā vā.*

[256] 5.108 *namo 'stu sarvadevebhyo dvijātibhyaḥ śubhaṁ tathā* (109) *jitaṁ Somena vai rājñā ārogyaṁ gobhya eva ca, brahmo 'ttaraṁ tathaivā 'stu hatā brahmadviṣas tathā* (110) *praśāstv imāṁ mahārājaḥ pṛthivīṁ ca sasāgarām, rājyaṁ pravardhatāṁ caiva raṅgaś cā 'yaṁ samṛdhyatām*, etc. For the connection between Moon (Soma) and *nāndī* see 5.51, for the Moon and the rasas see Bhāvaprakāśana, p. 197 (G.O.S.), lines 6–9.

[257] 35.96 *sarvaṁ stauti hi lokam.*

position near his navel, while the palm of his left hand, in which he seems to have held the horizontal *jarjara*, is turned downwards. All this can be explained as symbolic of the laying down of Indra's banner, which is now desecrated. After having "turned round" (5.101 *parivartana*) and recited two ślokas, the *sūtradhāra* joins his two assistants and returns the *jarjara* to one of them. Whatever the way in which the latter may have got rid of it (which is not clear from the text), it cannot be doubtful that this act meant the *visarjana* of the desecrated object, the technical term for which was *jarjaramokṣa* (27.40). At this moment, it seems, the acting was taken to have begun, and the jury of experts (*prāśnika*) started evaluating the acting (27.40). This moment, after the *jarjaramokṣa* (27.40) or after the first *jarjaraśloka* (5.118), was called *raṅgadvāra* "beginning of the acting" (5.27, 118)[258] or, it seems, *nāṭyadvāra*. It cannot have implied, however, that now the *pūrvaraṅga* lost its ritual character. Passages in which this view is taken, such as 32.460

prayujya ca bahirgītaṁ pūrvaraṅgaṁ prayojayet
pūrvaraṅge pravṛtte tu nāṭyadvāraṁ samāśrayet

"After the *bahirgīta* he performs the *pūrvaraṅga*, and after the *pūrvaraṅga* the *nāṭyadvāra*" cannot represent a common opinion of older times. Usually the *pūrvaraṅga* is said to commence with the *bahirgīta*, the first member, in which music was played behind the scenes to appease the demons, and to end with the *prarocanā*. If, therefore, *nāṭyadvāra* is actually a synonym of *raṅgadvāra*, the verse must represent a later practice, which would not be surprising in this appendix. (See p. 190). The alternative is that *nāṭyadvāra* (not attested elsewhere, as far as I know) denoted the beginning of the play proper, after the completion of the *pūrvaraṅga*.

However, the more of the *pūrvaraṅga* was skipped, the stronger became the tendency to consider the remainder as part of the play. According to Śāradātanaya's Bhāvaprakāśana, p. 288, 7–10 the *sūtradhāra* must announce the play, the hero, the story and the *rasa* in the *nāndī*. The first traces of this trend can be found in the definitions of the last two "members" of the *pūrvaraṅga* in Chapter V.

12. NĀYAKA, VIDŪṢAKA AND TRIGATA

In the preceding sections 5, 9 and 11, which dealt with the presents of the gods, the *jarjara* in the consecration of a new playhouse and the worship of the *jarjara* in the *pūrvaraṅga* respectively, it has been pointed out that the presents of Indra and Varuṇa, the *jarjara* and the golden pitcher, were particularly important. On the other hand, the ritual of the consecration and the *jarjaraprayoga* will, it is hoped, have made clear that the stage represented the sacred world and that the central deity in this world was Brahmā.

This long discussion of various religious aspects was necessary as an

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[258] 5.26 *yasmād abhinayas tatra prathamaṁ hy avatāryate* (27) *raṅgadvāram ato jñeyaṁ vāgaṅgābhinayātmakam*. Cf. IIJ. 16, pp. 260 and 264f.

introduction to one of the basic problems of the oldest form of the Sanskrit drama, viz. its chief characters. The key to this problem can be found in chapter I, where a separate passage deals with the divine protection of the theatre (I.82–95). After a lengthy enumeration of all the gods who protect the various parts of the building this passage concludes with briefly mentioning the protectors of the leading characters: "As for the *nāyaka*, he is protected by Indra, and the *nāyikā* by Sarasvatī. The Oṁkāra protects the *vidūṣaka*, and Hara [Śiva] the remaining characters" [259].

There is no reason to doubt that the Nāṭyaśāstra has here preserved a very old tradition, which is in accordance with the general archaic character of the first chapter. This tradition recognizes three protagonists, who are considered distinct from the rest of the troupe. In the following discussion the *nāyikā* will be left out of consideration. The final section is exclusively devoted to her.

The first conclusion that can be drawn from the oldest native tradition is that it does not lend the slightest support to modern theories which explain the *vidūṣaka* as a buffoon who at a comparatively late date intruded from the popular into the higher drama. This raises the question as to whether the modern interpretation of the character of the *vidūṣaka*, which is mostly regarded as self-evident and on which these theories are based, is correct. This point will be discussed below (§ 16).

That the tradition preserved in the Nāṭyaśāstra is actually very old follows from the fact that Indra is still regarded as the protagonist of the Devas, be it only on the occasion of the banner festival. The close relation between the *nāyaka* and his protector has already been referred to in the preceding section, where it has been argued that of the two assistants of the *sūtradhāra* in the *pūrvaraṅga*, the one who carries the *jarjara*, represents Indra, the giver of that religious symbol. There is, indeed, a double close relation, between Indra and the *nāyaka* on the one hand, and between the god and the *jarjara* on the other. It would seem a reasonable guess, therefore, that it is the *nāyaka* who in the ritual part of the *pūrvaraṅga* functions as the *jarjaradhara*, that is, the assistant who carries the *jarjara*. Apart from other arguments to be discussed below, it is significant that at the end of the *pūrvaraṅga* one assistant comes again to the front of the stage with the make-up of the *vidūṣaka*. At this moment his opponent may well have been recognizable as the *nāyaka*, but the text does not give any particulars.

A similar close relation must have existed between Varuṇa, the golden pitcher and the assistant who carried it. In view of the unmistakable

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[259] 1.96 *nāyakaṁ rakṣatī 'ndras tu nāyikāṁ tu Sarasvatī, vidūṣakam atho 'ṁkāraḥ śeṣās tu prakṛtīr Haraḥ*. An interesting parallel for the importance of the protection of the actors during the performance is provided by the *ḍalang*, who performs the *wayang* (shadow play) in Bali. As Hooykaas remarks: "A ḍalaṅ is prone to all sorts of dangers during a show" (Cosmogony and Creation in Balinese Tradition, p. 117). On the parallelism between *ḍalang* and *sūtradhāra* see J. J. Ras, BTLV 129 (1973), p. 456 (with references).

similarity between the make-up of the *vidūṣaka* and the outward appearance of the Vedic *jumbaká*, who represented Varuṇa (see § 18), the assistant who at the end of the *pūrvaraṅga* comes to the front as the *vidūṣaka* can only have been the *bhṛṅgāradhāra*. It might be expected, then, that the personal protector of the *vidūṣaka* was Varuṇa. In fact, however, the text gives a different and enigmatic name for the god who protects the *vidūṣaka*. It cannot be accidental that references to a god Oṁkāra are only seldom met with [260].

As a name for Viṣṇu it seems to occur only once in the Mahābhārata [261], which rules out the possibility that this god could have been meant. The same is true of Śiva [262], since he is mentioned in the same verse as the protector of all the other actors and thus is contrasted with Oṁkāra. The circumstance that Oṁkāra as the name of an individual god is only found in a few late Vedic texts may, therefore, be considered significant in the light of the archaic character of the first chapter of the Nāṭyaśāstra and its many Vedic reminiscences.

In one part of the Gopathabrāhmaṇa, which has gained a certain amount of independence under the name Praṇava-Upaniṣad [263], *oṁkāra* is both a term to denote the sacred syllable *Oṁ* [264] and, in the same passage, the name of a son of Brahmā. In I.1.23 the text relates how the gods, frightened by an attack of the Asuras on Indra's city *Vasor dhārā* [265], wondered who could repel the Asuras [266]. The text then runs

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[260] M. M. Ghosh only remarks that "Oṁkāra as a deity is very rarely to be met with" (Translation I², p. 13 n.).

[261] In the Mahāpuruṣastava, Mhbh. XII.325.83. Different is Hariv. App. I, 31.3648 *tvam oṁkaro vaṣaṭkāras tvaṁ yajñas tvaṁ Pitāmahaḥ.*

[262] The Petersburg Dictionary refers to Wilson, who in the Works by the late Horace Hayman Wilson vol. I (London 1862), p. 223 n. 1 quotes Aufrecht's Catalogue of the Bodleian, and Weber's of the Berlin manuscripts and writes, with regard to the legendary twelve liṅgas mentioned in the Nandi-Upapurāṇa (Śivapurāṇa ch. 44–61), that "*Omkára* is said to have been in Ujjain, but it is probably the shrine of MAHÁDEO at Omkára Mandatta [Mándháttá] on the Narmadá". For an ample description of this shrine see Central Provinces Gazetteer, 2nd ed., and Captain James Forsyth, The Highlands of Central India, 2nd. ed. (London 1872), p. 171f.: "Far to the west of Puchmurree, in the district of Nimár, is a rocky island in the Narbadá river called Mándháttá, on which is situated the shrine of Sívá called Omkár—one of the oldest and most famous of all India". Forsyth quotes from the "Narmadá khandá" (said to be part of the Skānda Purāṇa) and suggests that this may have been an old centre of worship of Kālī and Kāla-Bhairava by the Bhils before the first Rājput introduced Oṁkāra. Whether the name *Oṁkāratīrtha* (Verzeichnis der Oxforder Handschriften 68, b, 22) refers to the same place I am unable to verify, but the same name is mentioned several times in the Matsyapurāṇa, cf. 22.27 *Oṁkāraṁ pitṛtīrthaṁ ca Kāverī-kapilodakam* (cf. 189,6), 186.1–2 *idānīṁ Narmadāyās tu māhātmyaṁ vada sattama, yatro 'ṁkārasya māhātmyaṁ kapilā-saṁgamasya ca*, 195.1 *ity ākarṇya sa rājendra Oṁkārasyā 'bhivarṇanam.*

[263] GB I.1.16–30, cf. Deussen, Sechzig Upanishad's des Veda³, p. 858ff.

[264] GB I.1.22 *purastād oṁkāraṁ prayuṅkte.* Cf. NŚ. 34b. 178B *ādāv oṁkāra ucyate.*

[265] For *Vasordhārāṇām aindram nagaram* (ed. Gaastra) read *Vasor dhārā nāmai 'ndraṁ nagaram.* Cf. MS. III.4.1 (45,1), KS. XXI.11 (51,5 etc.), TS. V.4.8.1, ŚB. IX.3.2.1 (etc.) *vásor dhárām*, PB. XXI.3.7.

[266] Read: *ka imān asurān apahaniṣyati.*

as follows: "They saw Oṁkāra, the eldest son of Brahmā and said to him: 'May we, with thee as leader (*mukha*), be victorious over these Asuras'. He then said . . ." [267]. This passage stresses the fact that the oṁkāra precedes all other things (*pūrvam, āditaḥ*) [268], a notion which runs parallel with that of *oṁkāra* as the essence of everything [269]. At the end of the passage, indeed, the *oṁkāra* is said to be the *ṛc* in the *ṛc* (etc.), the *sūtra* in the *sūtra*, the *praṇava* in the *praṇava*. It is described, accordingly, as the core and essence of every solemn utterance and as such also as different from, and even transcending, the *praṇava Oṁ*. In this speculation the *oṁkāra* seems to come very close to the all-embracing notion of Brahman [270] and this is, indeed, stated *expressis verbis* in the Śaunaka-Upaniṣad [271]. Although in its first paragraph the syllable *Oṁ* (*praṇava*)is compared and then fully identified with Indra [272], in the third paragraph this merges in an identification with Brahman: "Der Praṇava ist Indra und darum gross . . . Da erkannte der Praṇava: . . . und ich bin die Erscheinung des Brahman und nicht von ihm verschieden". In the two Upaniṣads the *Praṇava/Oṁkāra* occurs in the characteristic Vedic frame-work of a fight between Devas and Asuras. Hence its being equated in the Śaunaka-Upaniṣad, as the king of syllables, with the king of the gods Indra. On the other hand this work, whose central motif is the glorification of the *praṇava*, thus introduces the notion of power. This is at variance with the basic idea of immanence, which comes out clearly

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[267] *ta Oṁkāraṁ Brahmaṇaḥ putraṁ jyeṣṭhaṁ dadṛśus, te tam abruvan: bhavatā mukhene 'mān asurāñ jayeme 'ti. sa ho 'vāca . . .* Note the modern expression *bhavatā mukhena* "with thee as leader" for MS. III.4.1 (45,11) etc. *tváyā múkhena.*

[268] GB. I.1.23 *tasmād oṁkāraḥ pūrvam ucyate*, 25 *tasmād vai tad bhadram oṁkāraṁ pūrvam ālebhe*, 24 *oṁkāraṁ āditaḥ kurvanti*, 28 *tasmād brahmavādina oṁkāraṁ āditaḥ kurvanti*, 26 *ādita oṁkāro vikriyate.* Cf. Śaunaka Upaniṣad (Deussen, Sechzig Upaniṣad's, p. 876) "Da machte Indra den Praṇava zum beständigen Anfang der Gāyatrī". The meaning of *mukha* is, accordingly, different from Chānd. Up. III.10.1 *tat* (scil. *amṛtam*) *Sādhyā upajīvanti Brahmaṇā mukhena* ("with Brahmā as their mouth") and Bṛh. Ār. Up. V.14.8, where Agni is the devouring mouth (*mukha*) of the *gāyatrī*-metre.

[269] GB. I.1.30 *ātmabhaiṣajyam ātmakaivalyam oṁkāraḥ.*

[270] In general *oṁkāra* and *praṇava* were, of course, identical. In the Ṣaḍviṁśa-brāhmaṇa (IV.5.3) Prajāpati is said to have seen as a "remedy" against the attacks of the Asuras: ṛta, satya, brahman, *oṁkāra* (commentary: *praṇava*), "and he (also) saw the *gāyatrī*, consisting of three pādas as the beginning (*?mukha*) of the brahman". Bollée translates "He saw the face (i.e. the most important part) of Brahman", taking *brahman* in two different meanings. In the current equation *bráhma gāyatrī́* the second word generally refers to the metre of that name, e.g. MS. III.4.4 (49,2) and Chānd. Up. III.12 (to which Eelsingh in his edition of the ṢB, p. 218, refers). Bollée refers to PB. XI.11.8–9, where however *brahman* denotes the priesthood. In the passage of the ṢB quoted above the words *tripadāṁ gāyatrīm* apparently also denote the metre, but then the meaning of *mukha* in *brahmaṇo mukham* by the side of *brahman* remains a crux. I doubt whether the gloss *pradhānam* of the commentator is correct. See also above, nn. 267 and 268.

[271] Deussen, Sechzig Upanishad's des Veda[3], p. 875ff.

[272] "Dieser Praṇava ist Indra, ist alles was ist" . . . "Indra ist das Bewegte und das Unbewegte, so sagen sie, Indra aber ist der Praṇava".

in the recognition that the *praṇava* is identical with the Brahman and in the words "denn der Gipfel der Grösse ist der Praṇava. Alle Wesen sind in ihm enthalten, und seine Stätte ist in dem Nachhall, denn in diesem hatte er sich verborgen". The same idea is stressed in the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, which not only depicts the Devas as invoking the assistance of *Oṁkāra*, the eldest son of Brahmā, but also describes the non-personified *oṁkāra* as comprising the totality of the divine world [273].

The only later relevant passage which has been quoted as referring to the personified *Oṁkāra* occurs in the Kāśīkhaṇḍa. It has, however, an incidental character [274]. Two passages in the Mahābhārata, VII.173.1457 *[275] and V.106.14 [276] can also be left out of consideration.

After this digression we can return to the protector of the *vidūṣaka*. The Nāṭyaśāstra has fortunately preserved a precious indication as regards the light in which the Oṁkāra should be considered. This is the word *ādau* in 33.224 *caturṇām api vedānām ādāv oṁkāra ucyate* "The oṁkāra is said to be at the beginning of the four Vedas, too". This reminds us of the speculations about the *oṁkāra* being *āditaḥ* etc. in GB. I.1.26 and 28 (see n. 268). This parallelism may not be accidental and may show that in this respect, too, the Nāṭyaśāstra is still rooted in the Vedic religious tradition. However, whether or not the vague figure of the divine Oṁkāra who protects the *vidūṣaka* is a reminiscence of the "eldest son of Brahmā" in the Gopatha Brahmaṇa I.1.23, the problem remains that the three other protectors, viz. Indra, Sarasvatī and Śiva, are well-known deities, whereas Oṁkāra can at best be associated with a very vague and incidental personification, somehow related to Brahmā but not

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[273] In GB. I.1.25 the four morae of the *oṁkāra* are equated to Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and all the gods (*sarvadevatya*).

[274] H. H. Wilson, op. c., p. 4 n. 1 (see PW. V, col. 1225) points to Kāśīkhaṇḍa 31. In this passage the Praṇava is introduced as speaking after the four Vedas, for which purpose he must assume a human figure (31.31): *tad udīritam ākarṇya praṇavātmā sanātanaḥ, amūrto mūrtimān bhūtvā hasamāna uvāca tau. Praṇava uvāca:* . . . Much later than this passage from a purported part of the Skāndapurāṇa is Māyā's account of the first being, which Wilson (p. 81) cites from the Bījak of Bhagodās, one of Kabir's disciples: "the Omkára did not witness his beginning, how then can I explain it . . .".

[275] In Mhbh. VII.173.1457* crit. ed. there is no reason to assume a personification: *śalyam Agniṁ ca vai kṛtvā puṅkhe Somam apāṁ patim, sa kṛtvā dhanur oṁkāraṁ sāvitrīṁ jyāṁ Maheśvaraḥ, hayāṁś ca caturo vedān sarvavedamayaṁ ratham, Prajāpatiṁ rathaśreṣṭhe viniyujya sa sārathim.* In the Bombay edition a longer passage is interpolated (VII.202.71–80). The *oṁkāra* here occurs in v. 76 *kṛtvo 'ṁkāraṁ pratodaṁ ca Brahmāṇaṁ caiva sārathim.* Both interpolations (and Mhbh. VIII.24.257*) are elaborations of an ancient Vedic equation, see n. 136. In contrast with this older version, which contains the names of three gods, the later one contains the four Vedas and the Sāvitrī-verse, which is never personified (PW. VII, col. 964f.). There is no reason, therefore, to consider *oṁkāra* as a personification.

[276] Mhbh. V.106.14 *oṁkārasyā 'tra jāyante sūtayo daśatīr daśa*, with a variant reading *sṛtayo* which Nīlakaṇṭha explains as follows: *sṛtayo: mārgāḥ. Oṁkāro vai sarvā vāg iti śruter, vedasya śākhāpraśākhādibhedo 'traiva jāta ity arthaḥ.* Neither reading is clear to me.

actually a god of the pantheon. Abhinavagupta refrains from giving any explanation. Since our difficulties in identifying this "god" can hardly be due to a deficient knowledge of the Hindu pantheon on our part, it is reasonable to conclude that this name has been chosen on purpose, just because it does not evoke the image of an individual god.

The reason for this remarkable choice must have been taboo. It is the object of this book to demonstrate that the *vidūṣaka* impersonated Varuṇa, who was too inauspicious to act (or, to be named) as the protector of a dramatic character. Was, then, Oṁkāra a different god, substituted for Varuṇa, or merely a euphemistic name, used because the real name was tabooed? As a mere guess it may be suggested that, since the *oṁkāra* was identified with the *brahman* (n. 270), and since *bráhman* could denote in Vedic the whole social class of brahmins, the *vidūṣaka*, who had to be a brahmin, was protected by an impersonation of the brahmins as a whole (see p. 222). According to Byrski (n. 1), p. 27 Oṁkāra stands for Brahmā.

The basic difficulty in studying Varuṇa is this element of taboo. An intentional reticence can seldom be proved. In his case, it is true, there are sufficient indications pointing to feelings of fear and awe with regard to him. We have some reason, therefore, to expect a restraint, dictated by taboo, in what Vedic and post-Vedic authors tell us about Varuṇa. Although it is argued again and again that the only sound and scholarly method of studying a god is to confine oneself to what the texts explicitly say, this is only fully true for the study of gods of a less complex character, such as Indra. It is seldom realized that the same principle, when applied to the study of Varuṇa, is tantamount to condemning oneself to an imperfect understanding, if not a complete misunderstanding, of the god. In this case it would be an unsound method to ignore the aspect of taboo and a possible reticence, and to proceed as if the direct data of the evidence are the only reliable basis for an interpretation of his character.

As we have seen above, in the *pūrvaraṅga* the *sūtradhāra* and his two assistants enter and leave the stage as a group. Since this is described by similar formulaic lines[277], the specification given for their entrance, viz. that the *sūtradhāra* goes between his assistants[278], must also be true of their exit. From the fact that the *pūrvaraṅga* is a ritual, it has been inferred that this position had a ritual meaning. The symbolism of the middle is too well known to need an ample discussion. In the Yajurveda Prajāpati is said to have created the Devas with his right hand (or, on his right) and the Asuras with (or, on) his left[279]. In modern illustrations of the Mahābhārata Yudhiṣṭhira is represented as seated in the middle, with Bhīma and Arjuna sitting to the right of him, and Nakula and Sahadeva on his left[280]. Right is always associated with the higher group

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[277] See 5.69 *praviśeyuḥ samaṁ trayaḥ* and 5.142 *niṣkrāmeyuḥ samaṁ trayaḥ.*

[278] See 5.70 *madhye tu sūtradhṛk tābhyāṁ vṛtaḥ.*

[279] See MS. I.9.3 (132,16) *dákṣiṇena hástena devắn ásṛjata savyéná 'surāṁs, té devá vīryàvanto 'bhavan mṛddhá ásurāḥ,* KS. IX.11 (112, 18) *dakṣiṇaṁ hastam anu devān asṛjata te vīryāvanto 'bhavan, savyaṁ hastam anv asurāṁs te mṛddhā abhavan.*

[280] See Numen 8, p. 41f.

and the divine, left with the lower order. In the ordered world the contrast between Devas and Asuras in the cosmogony has been replaced by that of upper world and nether world[281]. For that reason the *jarjaradhara*, as he represented the world of the Devas, must have gone on the right of the *sūtradhāra*. The ambiguous position of Varuṇa has been amply discussed in Ch. I. Although he had become a Deva (be it a *devá ásura*, who remained associated with the nether world), the Vedic theological system leads to the supposition that at the end of every year he became again an Asura. But apart from this conclusion, which cannot be supported by direct evidence of our texts, the fact that he stood for the nether world was sufficient reason to make him, *in this respect*, inferior to the representative of the upper world. It may not be superfluous to warn against the misconception that Varuṇa was therefore considered morally inferior to Indra. Moral appreciations according to human standards are out of place here. In the last hundred years they have contributed much to misinterpreting and distorting the image of the Vedic pantheon. That the Vedic Varuṇa, as the guardian of the cosmic order (*ṛtásya gopáḥ*) had a majestic character does not contradict the fact that as a god of the nether world he was of a lower order than the gods of the other moiety. The assistant who carried his present and symbol, the golden pitcher, must therefore have gone on the left of the *sūtradhāra*.

This conclusion is of direct importance for the interpretation of the next part of the *pūrvaraṅga*, which follows the desecration of the *jarjara*, viz. the so-called Trigata (5.136–140) or Trika (?5.16). After a detailed description of the dance steps of the Mahācārī (5.128–135) the Nāṭyaśāstra describes the Trigata as follows: "When this is finished he addresses[282] his assistants while taking three steps[283]. When they have come to him, those who know (the tradition well) sing a *narkuṭaka* song[284]. [While this is being sung he performs (the Sūcī [Vedha] Cārī) by putting forward the left foot first and the right foot afterwards][285]. He must also perform a Trigata in the Bhāratī style[286]. The *vidūṣaka* holds a conversation which is *ekapadā*(?)[287], mainly consists of incoherent phrases and evokes a smile of the *sūtradhāra*. [He must make critical comments[288], with abrupt

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[281] See History of Religions 15, p. 113.

[282] The use of *vyā-hṛ-* seems uncommon but it can hardly have a different meaning from the one assumed here. Influence of *ā-hṛ-*"herbeiholen" (Feistel) is improbable.

[283] *tripadyā:* cf. 5.99a, where the reading *tripadair* C is against the manuscripts. The meaning is unknown but is obviously different from *tripadī*, name of a metre. Feistel, p. 80, translates "mit einem Dreischritt".

[284] See for the *narkuṭaka* or *natkuṭaka* (*dhruvā*) 32.322–347 (and vv. 395, 440, 476–478), 34.204+ KM (p. 643 line 19, p. 644 line 3)=33.237+, 238+C.

[285] This verse, only found in B and C, is the same as 5.135a C.

[286] See n. 307.

[287] The reading *ekapade* C seems to be a mere conjecture for *ekapadām* of the other editions. B does not mention any variant reading. For this word see Feistel, pp. 83, 120.

[288] *vitaṇḍā:* Ghosh translates it by "controversial topic", Feistel by '"frivole" Diskussion' and refers to Nyāyakośa (Poona 1928), s.v. See below, p. 190ff.

remarks [289] and enigmatical utterances [290], and questions such as 'Who is standing (there)?' (or) 'Who has won?', etc., which having a bearing (?) [291] on the (following) play. The *trigata* is performed as a conversation [292] by one assistant. It is distorted [293] by the *vidūṣaka* but established by the *sūtradhāra*]" [294].

This curious intermezzo is, apart from the following Prarocanā, the final "member" of the *pūrvaraṅga*. Hardly any attempt has been made to understand its meaning. As far as I can see, scholars have without

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[289] For *gaṇḍa* see 20.129ff. (18.125B), Lévi, p. 115 and Konow, p. 22 "Wenn ein von einem Aussenstehenden gesprochenes Wort sich in ein Gespräch hineinfügt, und z.B. wie eine Antwort auf eine Frage aufgefasst wird". This is based on Daśarūpaka 3.18 *gaṇḍaṁ prastutasaṁbandhibhinnārthaṁ sahaso 'ditam*, where the commentary refers to Uttararāmacarita 1.38+. Haas renders it by "abrupt remark" (cf. Feistel, p. 83). Similarly Sāhitya Darpaṇa 527 (VI.260 *gaṇḍaṁ prastutasaṁbandhi bhinnārthaṁ satvaraṁ vacaḥ*) and Nāṭyadarpaṇa 2.97, which K. H. Trivedi, The Nāṭyadarpaṇa p. 110 paraphrases "When a relevant speech suggests, all of a sudden, some other sense it is called *Gaṇḍa*". But Sāgaranandin, Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa 2990 (366) takes it in a different sense.

[290] For *nālikā* (*nālīkā* KM) see 20.123C *hāsyenā 'vagatārthā prahelikā nālike 'ti vijñeyā*, Daśarūpaka 3.19 *sopahāsā nigūḍhārthā nālikaiva prahelikā*, Sāhitya Darpaṇa 529 (6.261) *prahelikaiva hāsyena yuktā bhavati nālikā*, S. Lévi, p. 116 "paroles énigmatiques où se mêle la plaisanterie et dont le sens est caché", similarly Konow, p. 21. Sāgaranandin 2935 (360–61) adds an alternative definition. B (5.135a) reads *tālikām* without indicating on which manuscripts this is based. The reading has been adopted by Raghuvaṁśa and Feistel. The latter's guess (p. 83) " 'Schnapsideen', Rede die vom Toddy (*tālī*) beeinflusst ist" is rather far-fetched. The only word *tāla* which frequently occurs in the NŚ. denotes musical time, e.g. 5.132, 144–46, 148. (For Hindi *tāṛī*, Engl. *toddy* see Turner, CDIAL. no. 5750 [the Kādambarī has both *tāḍīpuṭa* p. 126,23 and (*tālapatra* 20,8), *tālīpaṭṭa* 188,3, *tālīpuṭa* 98,16], and Hobson-Jobson, p. 927f.). KM. only records the v. l. *nāmikām* (in KSS). The verse occurs exclusively in one (or two) manuscript(s) of the Madras Gov. Or. Mss. Library and the library of Trivandrum.

[291] *prarūpiṇīm* : a (probably late) hapax, from **prarūpayati*, used instead of *ni-rūp-*, cf. 5.141 *kāvyavastunirūpaṇam*. Perhaps corrupt for *-prarūpaṇīm*, but see Debrunner, Altind. Grammatik II-2, p. 342f.

[292] *saṁjalpa*, cf. 5.28–29 *vidūṣakaḥ sūtradhāras tathā vai pāripārśvikaḥ, yatra kurvanti saṁjalpaṁ tac cāpi trigataṁ smṛtam*. Konow, p. 24, gives the correct translation "Gespräch", cf. p. 191. Not "(amüsantes) Geschwätz" (Feistel, pp. 34, 83, 120), "gemeinsames Geschwätz" (idem, p. 151).

[293] *vidūṣitaḥ* C KM, *virūpitaḥ* B. Raghuv. No edition records a variant reading. The verse is not commented upon by Abhinavagupta. The former word occurs elsewhere in the NŚ., cf. 34.217 KM. (*carmalakṣaṇam*) *na bhūmāgnividūṣitam* (but 33.251C *na ca dhūmāgnidūṣitam*). The word may be meant as an etymological explanation of *vidūṣaka* (n. 320) and *virūpita* may be the *lectio facilior*, due to a copyist but this cannot be decided without a better knowledge of the evidence of the manuscripts. See nn. 320, 355 and 391.

[294] 5.136 *tasyā 'nte tu tripadyā 'tha vyāharet pāripārśvikau, tayor āgamane kāryaṁ gānaṁ narkuṭakaṁ budhaiḥ* (137) *tatrā 'pi vāmavedhas tu vikṣepo dakṣiṇasya ca, tathā ca bhāratībhede trigataṁ saṁprayojayet* (138) *vidūṣakas tv ekapadāṁ sūtradhāra-smitāvahām, asaṁbaddhakathāprāyāṁ kuryāt kathanikāṁ tataḥ* [(139) *vitaṇḍāṁ gaṇḍasaṁyuktāṁ nālikāṁ ca prayojayet, kas tiṣṭhati jitaṁ kene 'tyādi kāvya-prarūpiṇīm* (140) *pāripārśvikasaṁjalpo vidūṣakavidūṣitaḥ, sthāpitaḥ sūtradhāreṇa trigataṁ saṁprayujyate*].

exception taken it for granted that it was a meaningless farce. The later Indian theorists did not understand it any more, and from the fact that they even omit it in their lists of the "members" of the *pūrvaraṅga*[295] it may be inferred that not only its performance on the stage had become obsolete (which was probably true for almost the whole *pūrvaraṅga*), but no memory of it had even survived.

In the light of our conclusion, however, that the whole *pūrvaraṅga* was a ritual which aimed at a restoration of the primeval sacred world on the stage and a re-enactment of at least a part of the cosmogony by celebrating the erection of the Indra pole, the question as to the meaning of the Trigata cannot be lightly dismissed. The ritual character of the context in which it appears leads to the conclusion that this quasi-comical intermezzo must originally have been completely different from the clownish act which it is generally taken to be. The author of ch. V of the Nāṭyaśāstra himself, to whom we owe the last echo of what at one time must have been a meaningful performance, does not seem to have had any idea as to why this Trigata had to be performed. From his description we can only infer that he simply transmitted a tradition which had been observed from times immemorial. At this point the modern student of the Sanskrit drama is faced with a basic methodological dilemma. Trying to understand and interpret the scanty data of the Indian handbook means, in this case more than in others, going farther back into the past, beyond the Nāṭyaśāstra, and reconstructing, on the basis of what we think we can understand of the ancient *pūrvaraṅga*, a meaning for which even our earliest dramaturgical source can provide no corroboration. The alternative is to confine oneself to what the text says *expressis verbis* and to the conclusions that can be drawn from it, which would imply that one would have to abstain from any guess at a possible meaning of the Trigata and leave it for what it is in our text: an incomprehensible *corpus alienum* in a ritual of high religious importance. No scholar has shown this self-restraint, for interpreting the Trigata as a farce means saying more than the text itself permits. The following sections are based on the conviction that the bounds set to research are not always necessarily dictated by the nature of our sources and that an effort to reconstruct,

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[295] It is interesting to see which of the twenty-two members (against twenty-one in NŚ. 33.226+, see IIJ. 16, p. 243 n. 10) Sāgaranandin, NLRK. 1126f. considers worth mentioning: *pratyāhāra* (placing of the musicians), *mārjanā* (playing of the drum), *gītavidhi* (song of praise), *brahmayogacārī* (graceful song and dance), *mahācārī* (forceful song and dance), *prarocanā* (inducement), *nāndī* (benediction), *jarjarastuti* (praise of the *jarjara*), *digvandanā* (salutation of the cardinal points), etc. (here quoted according to the translation by Dillon-Fowler-Raghavan). The order is strange but from the words (v. 1088) *nāndy api tatraiva kartavyā* we may infer that the *nāndī* at this time (1200–1250?) was recited after the *prarocanā*, immediately before the *sūtradhāra* entered (1094 *yad ucyate nāndyante sūtradhāra iti*). While Sāgaranandin quotes illustrative texts of the *prarocanā*, *nāndī*, *jarjarastuti* and *digvandanā*, his reticence about the Trigata was not, perhaps, entirely due to its character of an improvisation in prose. It may have been a mere name known from the Nāṭyaśāstra.

if possible, a pre-literary stage can at times be as legitimate as the reconstruction of a prehistoric linguistic stage.

A serious difficulty, however, is the circumstance that the word *trigata*, apart from denoting one of the last members of the *pūrvaraṅga*, also occurs in a seemingly different meaning in the list of the thirteen constituents of the *vīthī*, the so-called *vīthyaṅgas*[296]. It is therefore necessary, in order to prevent wrong conclusions, first to examine the use of the term *trigata*.

13. THE TRIGATA I.

A definition of the *vīthyaṅga* Trigata has been handed down in two different versions, both in the *āryā* metre and both corrupt. They will be distinguished as A and B. The version A is found in 20.128 C

yad udāttavacanam iha ca tridhā vibhaktaṁ bhavet prayogeṣu
hāsyarasasaṁprayuktaṁ tat trigataṁ nāma vijñeyam

and in 18.179–180 KM (where it is given as a variant reading in the critical apparatus)

yathā 'nudāttavacanaṁ tridhā vibhaktaṁ bhavet prayoge tu
hāsyarasasaṁprayuktaṁ tat trigataṁ nāma vijñeyam

In the second quotation the first word *yathā* must be corrupt for metrical reasons. One may conjecture *yatrā* or, in view of *yad* in C, *yady*. For metrical reasons, however, the latter reading would necessitate a further alteration of the text by reading *yady anudāttaṁ vacanaṁ*, which is improbable[297].

Version B is found in 18.179b–180a KM

śrutisārūpyārthātmani bahavo 'rthā yuktibhir niyujyante
yad dhāsyam ahāsyaṁ vā trigataṁ nāmā 'pi vijñeyam[298]

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[296] See Konow, p. 21f.: "Bestandteile der vīthī"; Haas, Daśarūpa, p. 84: "division", Ghosh, Translation I, p. 371 n. 1: "type"; Feistel, pp. 103, 105: "Glieder der Vīthī". Cf. 22.26 *bhedāḥ . . . aṅgatvam āgatāḥ* "varieties . . . have become its component parts" (Ghosh), "Arten . . . sind zu Gliedern geworden" (Feistel).

[297] For *udātta* "exalted" ("erhaben", Konow, p. 34) with reference to persons cf., e.g., 20.10 and 64 *prakhyātodāttanāyaka*, 34.20 *senāpatir āmatyaś ca dhīrodāttau prakīrtitau*, 34.26 *divyā ca nṛpapatnī ca kulastrī gaṇikā tathā, etās tu nāyikā jñeyā nānāprakṛtilakṣaṇāḥ* (27) *dhīrā(ś) ca lalitā(ś) caiva udāttā nibhṛtā(s) tathā, divyā rājāṅganā hy etā guṇair yuktā bhavanti hi* (28) *udāttā nibhṛtā caiva bhavet tu kulajāṅganā, lalitā cā 'py udāttā ca gaṇikā śilpakārikā* and *passim*. On the other hand, it is true, *udātta* is met with in such expressions as NŚ. 20.32 *udāttavacana(kṛta)* "exalted speech", 20.45 *udāttā bhāvāḥ* "exalted situations", 26.11 *gambhīrodāttasaṁyuktān* "deep and exalted (feelings)", Dhanaṁjaya, Daśar. 3.60 *anudāttokti*, Śāradātanaya, BhPr. p. 197, 16 *prakhyātodāttavastunaḥ*, Sāgaranandin, NLRK. 321–22 *tayor udāttam api vacanam* (with Raghavan's note, p. 61). See further below, p. 188. Ghosh's translation "exalted words" is, therefore, also possible.

[298] For *yad* the edition has the conjecture *etad*, which is against the metre.

and in 18.264 B (here quoted from a foot-note in C)

śrutisārūpyād asmin bahavo 'rthā yuktibhir niyujyante
yad dhāsyam ahāsyaṁ vā trigataṁ nāmā 'pi vijñeyam

Version A can be translated as follows: "When in a performance a talk of (non?-)exalted persons is divided over three (characters) and it has the comical sentiment, it is to be distinguished as a Trigata". As for version B, whatever may have been meant exactly by its composer, it clearly refers to something quite different from A: "In it many meanings are artfully attached to (a sentence, etc.) owing to a resemblance of sound. This, which may have a comic or non-comic character, is to be distinguished by the name Trigata". It is interesting to see that one of the earliest among the later theorists, Dhanaṁjaya (between 974 and 996 A.D.), did not try to conciliate the two contrasting definitions but simply juxtaposed them (Daśarūpaka 3.16):

śrutisāmyād anekārthayojanaṁ trigataṁ tv iha
naṭāditritayālāpaḥ pūrvaraṅge tad iṣyate

which can only mean that he still recognized, beside the modern *vīthyaṅga*, a different Trigata that was limited to the *pūrvaraṅga*. His commentator (and brother?) Dhanika only explains the first meaning (like the Nāṭyadarpaṇa, which takes it in the sense *saṁdeha* "doubt", see K. H. Trivedi, The Nāṭyadarpaṇa, pp. 114f., 124) and quotes Vikramorvaśī I.3 (N.S. Press): here the *sūtradhāra* is in doubt whether he bears bees, a cuckoo or *kiṁnarīs* (v.l. divine women). Similarly Śāradātanaya, Bhāvaprakāśana p. 231, lines 10–15 (between 1100 and 1300 A.D.), who quotes the Daśarūpaka but then adds the line *etat prastāvanātme 'ti kathyate nāṭyavedibhiḥ* "experts call it a kind of prologue". This shows that he mixed up the Trigata and the *āmukha* (prologue). Significant for this confusion is the fact that in his definition of the older Trigata (Bh. Pr. p. 197 line 19) he substitutes *sallāpa* (that is, *saṁlāpa*) from the definition of the *āmukha* (NŚ. 22.28) for *saṁjalpa*. In the first passage quoted here there can be no doubt that Śāradātanaya, like Dhanika, is only referring to the later Trigata. It is, however, difficult to decide whether he regarded the two Trigatas (the older one of which was a purely traditional name to him) as identical. Unfortunately, Raghavan's book on Bhoja, who was Śāradātanaya's main source, is inaccessible to me so that it is impossible to determine to what extent Śāradātanaya is here dependent on his predecessor. He illustrates his definition with a quotation from a *vīthī*, which is similar in character to Dhanika's example. Viśvanātha (between 1300 and 1350?), as usual, follows Dhanaṁjaya in paraphrasing the Daśarūpaka: *trigataṁ syād anekārthayojanaṁ śrutisāmyataḥ* "The Trigata is the application of more than one meaning to a sentence owing to a similarity of sound" (Sāhityadarpaṇa 523/VI.257). The commentary refers to it as a different opinion and quotes as an example Vikramorvaśī IV.21 (NS Press), where the echo of a question is taken as the answer to it. Only Sāgaranandin (between 1200 and 1250?) in his Nāṭakalakṣaṇarat-

nakośa 2981/364 presents an entirely different definition, viz. *sphuṭa-bhāvyarthakathanam* "telling clearly what is going to happen".

On the strength of these later texts and their commentaries Konow (p. 22) interprets this definition as follows: "wenn dieselben Worte verschiedenen Sinn haben, z.B. wenn ein Echo als Antwort auf eine Frage aufgefasst wird; verschieden hiervon ist der neunzehnte Bestandteil des pūrvaraṅga". Cf. Lévi, p. 114, Śāradātanaya p. 231 l. 13ff.

Konow's last words confront us with the fundamental problem: was there any connection between the Trigata of the *pūrvaraṅga* and the *vīthyaṅga* of that name, or were they indeed, as Konow assumes, entirely different? Feistel, p. 81f., arrives after an ample discussion at the conclusion that the definition of version B is a later interpolation, inserted by one who did no longer know the difference between the two Trigatas. Like Konow, accordingly, he assumes that the two Trigatas were originally different. His arguments will be discussed below.

The first difficulty that faces us when we try to disentangle this complex of problems is the circumstance that the manuscripts give two entirely different definitions. That version B is also found in the Daśarūpaka and the Sāhityadarpaṇa is no proof for its being the older form. Its words *yad dhāsyam ahāsyaṁ vā* "which can have a comical character or not" rather seem to contain an element of polemics directed against *hāsyarasa-saṁprayuktam* "with the comical sentiment" of A. If that is correct, A is the older definition and has been replaced by a later one, which covered a wider use of the rhetorical figure.

Another and stronger argument in favour of the older age of A is the fact that it apparently still describes the Three Men's Talk of the *pūrvaraṅga*, whereas B refers to something different. Some more conclusions can be drawn from A. According to the reading *anudātta-* in KM., the *saṁjalpa* between the three men was considered a conversation between lower characters. In this view the *sūtradhāra* who, as the word *tridhā* implies, was placed on the same level with the two participants in the conversation, must have lost his lofty character when coming back to the front of the stage. This raises a number of questions, because there are no indications to show that at this point the *pūrvaraṅga* had already ceased to be a religious ceremony. Unfortunately we have no means of answering such questions as: on what manuscript evidence is this reading based, and, is it probable that the one who for the first time wrote *anudātta-* "non-exalted" had still seen the whole *pūrvaraṅga* (including the Trigata) performed on the stage, at a time when the Trigata had already been degraded to a mere farce? Or was he writing about a literary tradition to which nothing corresponded any longer in practice? These questions are important because the same definition has been handed down in a form which says exactly the opposite, viz. that the Three Men's Talk was performed by exalted characters. The variant form of the verse in which *udātta-vacanam* "consisting of words of exalted characters" (C) occurs is certainly a bit clumsy, with its stop-gap *iha ca*, but then, this is not uncommon in such technical definitions which had to be given in

a metrical form. Judging from what it says, the latter reading is no doubt the *lectio difficilior*. No attempt will be made, however, with the scanty data that are at our disposal, to decide this text-critical problem. It is sufficient to state that there *is* a tradition according to which the three actors of the *jarjaraprayoga* (including the *vidūṣaka*), when coming back to the front, had remained exalted characters or spoke an "exalted" text.

For determining the relation of the Trigata as described in definition A to the *vīthyaṅga* of that name it is important to note that the words *tridhā vibhaktam* "divided over three (characters)" are irreconcilable with the general rule that all *vīthyaṅgas* had only one or two actors: "The vīthī consists of one act and has one or two actors"[299]. This unambiguous definition (quoted by Konow, p. 32) is, however, curiously contradicted by a line which precedes it in the Kāvyāmālā-edition, but follows it in C: "It has three characters who can be of the high, the middle or the low category". (*adhamottama-madhyābhir yuktā syāt prakṛtibhis tisṛbhiḥ*)[300]. Konow refers to the Sāhitya Darpaṇa[301]. That this line, which directly contradicts the general rule has been inserted at a later time into the text of the Nāṭyaśāstra is indicated by its place in the manuscripts, before or after the general rule. It must have become necessary at a time when to the list of the *vīthyaṅgas* a new one was added with three characters. As a result the older definition was no longer generally valid and had to be widened so as to comprise the Trigata with its three characters. Sāgaranandin, as a matter of fact, describes the *vīthī* in general as performed by three actors[302] and quotes as an example for the Trigata a passage from a classical drama in which a female character predicts (or rather hints at) future events[302a].

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[299] Cf. 20.112 *vīthī syād ekāṅkā dvipātrahāryā tathai 'kahāryā ca*. Cf. 18.163 KM *vīthī syād ekāṅkā tathai 'kahāryā dvihāryā vā*.

[300] This is, it seems to me, the only possible translation. Ghosh renders it as follows: "And it is to include characters of the superior, the middling or the inferior type" but ignores the crucial word *tisṛbhiḥ*. In the introduction to his translation, vol. I², p. XLVI, he paraphrases these words as follows: "It may contain any of the three kinds of characters superior, middling and inferior (XX.112–113)". The reason for this remarkable interpretation can be found in the words which precede it: "Vīthī should be acted by one or two persons".

[301] Konow, p. 32, who refers to SD. 6.253f.: "SD. bemerkt aber, dass nach der Ansicht eines Unbenannten auch drei auftreten können, ein Hochstehender (uttama), einer mittleren Ranges (madhyama) und ein Niedrigstehender (adhama). Der Kommentar zum Mālatīmādhava, ed. Bhandarkar², S. 81, schreibt diese dem Bharata zu. Das dort gegebene Zitat lässt sich aber in der Ausgabe nicht nachweisen, und nach SD. handelt es sich wohl um eine andere Autorität". The text reads: *vīthyām eko bhaved aṅkaḥ kaś cid eko 'tra kalpyate, ākāśabhāṣitair uktaiś citrāṁ pratyuktim āśritaḥ*, etc. and the commentary explains *kaścid* by *uttamo madhyamo 'dhamo vā*.

[302] Sāgaranandin, NLRK. 2906 (357+) *atha vīthī. sā ca tribhiḥ pātraiḥ prayoktavyā. yathā Bakulavīthikā. uttamādhamamadhyamanāyikābhūṣitā triprakṛtiyutā bījabindukāryair arthaprakṛtibhir yuktā. ekāṅkā saṁdhidvayayuktā mukhanirvahaṇayutā nānārasabhāvasaṁdhitā ca. asyā aṅgāni trayodaśa*, (etc.). Cf. 1855 *vīthikāyāḥ, udghātyakādi trayodaśa*.

[302a] Ibidem (v. 2981/364+) *sphuṭabhāvyarthakathanaṁ trigatam. yathā Kadalīgṛhe*

Our tentative conclusion is that definition A, which corresponds to the Trigata of the *pūrvaraṅga* and is more concrete, is older than version B, which is vaguer, more comprehensive and which seems to contain a correction of A. Although none of these arguments is in itself decisive, the correspondence of B with the Daśarūpaka and the Sāhitya Darpaṇa shows that this definition was accepted in later times. Whether this reconstruction is correct or not, line 20.112b is, as far as I can see, only explicable as a later interpolation. Since the general rule in 20.112a prescribes for all *vīthyaṅgas* a maximum of two actors, one is bound to conclude that the words *tridhā vibhaktam* in definition A of the Trigata (20.128) are irreconcilable with the older definition of the *vīthyaṅgas*. Thus the Trigata as defined in version A cannot originally have been a *vīthyaṅga*. Konow and other scholars have arrived at the same conclusion but in their opinion this discrepancy proved that the *vīthyaṅga* Trigata as a rhetorical figure had from the outset been different from the Trigata of the *pūrvaraṅga*. The only text, however, which Konow had at his disposal in 1920 was the first edition of the Nāṭyaśāstra in the Kāvyamālā Series. It seems now possible to reconstruct the historical development in greater detail.

All "members of the *vīthī*" are as such also kinds of the verbal style (*bhāratī vṛtti*)[303]. As *bhāratībhedas all* vīthyaṅgas can be used in, e.g., the prologue (*āmukha* or *prastāvanā*), which is itself also a *bhāratībheda*[304]. The "laudation" (*prarocanā*), which follows the Trigata and is the end of the *pūrvaraṅga*, is expressly mentioned as a form of *bhāratībheda*[305]. In the same manner the verbal character of the Trigata of the *pūrvaraṅga* involved that, even at a time when it was not yet inserted in the list of *vīthyaṅgas*, it was performed according to the verbal style (*bhāratī vṛtti*). When the theorists began to list the many cases of the verbal style as special "species" of the *vīthī*, the Trigata was also marked as a special vīthyaṅga[306]. It should be noted that the wording of 5.137 *tathā ca bhāratībhede trigataṁ prayojayet* "and further he should perform the Trigata in a kind of verbal style"[307] does not necessarily imply that the

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[Ratnāvalī II.0.61] *Susaṁgatā: esā uṇa ettha sāriā saṅkidavvā. kadā vi gahidatthā kassa vi purado pāsedi* "Trigata is clearly to tell what is going to happen. For example, in *Kadalīgṛha:* Susaṁgatā: But this sārikā is to be mistrusted. If she hears what we say, she may at any time make it public before anyone" (Transl. M. Dillon etc.). Cf. Śāradātanaya p. 231 ll. 14–15.

[303] Cf. 20.107 *vīthyaṅga* and 22.26 *bhedās tasyās tu vijñeyāś catvāro 'ṅgatvam āgataḥ.*

[304] 22.29 *vīthyaṅgair anyathā 'pi vā* "they adopt any type of the *vīthī* or talk in any other way" (transl. Ghosh).

[305] 22.27 *jayābhyudayinī caiva maṅgalyā vijayāvahā, sarvapāpapraśamanī pūrvaraṅge prarocanā.*

[306] Similarly A. Barth, Oeuvres IV, p. 149. Cf. Feistel, pp. 103 and 104.

[307] Similarly Feistel, p. 80. Ghosh translates "Then, in case of a play in the Verbal Style (*bhāratī vṛtti*) the Three Men's talk should take place". This is impossible because the Trigata is part of the *pūrvaraṅga*, which is performed irrespective of the nature of the following play.

author was already acquainted with the theory of the *vīthyaṅgas*. The fact that he explicitly mentions the *bhāratībheda* may even indicate that at his time the theory of a "verbal style" had not yet been developed to such an extent as to make this characterization of the Trigata superfluous.

It is, indeed, attractive to accept Feistel's assumption[308] that the elaboration of a systematic theory of the *bhāratī vṛtti* in ch. 22 (20 KM) dates from a later period (circa 250 A.D. according to Feistel). At that time four *bhāratībhedas* "kinds of the verbal style" were distinguished, viz. the *prarocanā*, the *āmukha*, the *vīthī* and the *prahasana*[309]. The first belonged to the *pūrvaraṅga* and the second, immediately following it, was the introductory part of the drama. It would not be surprising, therefore, if the Trigata had also been inserted as a "member" of the *vīthī*, which would explain why it is not expressly listed here. This brings us with due caution to the conclusion that the "two Trigatas" were historically one and the same. While, however, the older Trigata of the *pūrvaraṅga* fell into disuse at an early date, theorists started looking for instances of the *vīthyaṅga* Trigata and quoted scenes of an entirely different character (cf. the quotation from Sāgaranandin in n. 302). It may be true that according to the later theory all *bhāratībhedas* belonged to the literary art of the dramatist[310]. This would only prove that the improvised Trigata of the *pūrvaraṅga*, which did not form part of the drama proper and which had to be performed *bhāratībhede*, dates back to a time when such theoretical distinctions were not yet made.

Definition A (see p. 180) still seems to refer to the old Trigata but its characterization of this scene as "performed with the comic sentiment" (*hāsyarasasaṁprayukta*) indicates that the Trigata had already come to be regarded as a farce. It is further difficult to decide which of the two variant readings *udāttavacanam* (C) and *anudāttavacanam* (KM) is correct. Arguments have been brought forward above for the correctness of the former on the assumption that the definition actually refers to the old Trigata. As for definition B (18.264 B, 174 KM), it apparently refers to Trigatas of a more general character, which occurred in the plays and had not necessarily a comic character. It has probably taken the place of A at a time when there was no memory any more of the older Trigata.

Even in the theory of chapter XXII there are some details which seem to be inconsistent. Among the characteristics of the verbal style are mentioned the absence of female characters and the use of Sanskrit. One of the four categories of this style, however, is the *āmukha*, the introduction of the prologue of a drama, which can consist of a talk between the *naṭī* and the *sūtradhāra*[311]. As for the Trigata, not even the restriction that

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[308] See Feistel, pp. 136, 125.

[309] Similarly Daśarūpaka 3.5, Sāhitya Darpaṇa 6.30.

[310] See Feistel, p. 81, who considers the possibility that the Trigata of the *pūrvaraṅga* might have got its name from the rhetorical figure. The evolution has rather been the other way round.

[311] 22.28 *naṭī vidūṣako vā 'pi pāripārśvika eva vā, sūtradhāreṇa sahitāḥ saṁlāpaṁ*

only Sanskrit should be used (22.25) was later considered valid, for Sāgaranandin quotes a scene from the Ratnāvalī in which a female servant is speaking Prakrit.

It must be admitted that the evidence is too scanty for an irrefutable reconstruction of the historical development between the Nāṭyaśāstra and the dramaturgists after 1000 A. D. In such a situation it is in general advisable to abstain from even tentative conclusions. In this particular case, however, no attempt at an explanation of the ancient Trigata can be made without determining to what extent later definitions can have had a bearing on this Trigata. Whatever the merits or demerits of this reconstruction which will here be briefly summarized, one conclusion seems sufficiently well founded, viz. that the Trigata of the *pūrvaraṅga* stands quite apart. It has to be taken as an episode of the *pūrvaraṅga* in its own right and must be interpreted in the light of the only authentic evidence available, viz. the passage at NŚ. 5.137–140 and the definition given at 5.28–29.

To the authors of these two passages its meaning seems no longer to have been fully clear but there is nothing in their wording to justify its being characterized as "amusing small talk" [312]. There is, however, one word in one of the interpolations which betrays that a later conception had already begun to gain ground: the "controversial topic" (*vitaṇḍā*) is said to have some bearing on the following play (*kāvyaprarūpiṇī*). First, this is against the general character of the *pūrvaraṅga*, which is a worship of the gods (*devārcanavidhi* NLRK. 2159), in which the audience is not addressed directly and which had no relation to the play (*kāvya*). Secondly, it was seen above (p. 181) that in later times the disputation (*saṁjalpa*) of the Trigata got mixed up with the *saṁlāpa* of the prologue (*āmukha*), whose proper function was to introduce the first actor (NŚ. 22.28–36). For these reasons it may be suggested that alluding to the following play was not originally a function of the Trigata and that the word *kāvyaprarūpiṇī*, occurring in the interpolation which is only found in two South Indian manuscripts, dates from a time when the proper character of the Trigata was no longer understood.

A similar term, viz. *kāvyavastunirūpaṇam* "mentioning the plot of the play" is also found in the definition of the next (and last) member of the *pūrvaraṅga*. This is the *prarocanā*, and here, again, the tradition has got confused. If we first consider the two definitions of Chapter Five, we find:

5.141

prarocanā 'tha kartavyā siddheno 'panimantraṇā (-ṇam)
raṅgasiddhau punaḥ kāryaṁ kāvyavastunirūpaṇam

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yatra kurvate. Feistel, p. 125 is probably right in explaining this as the result of a later development as against 5.167ff., where only the *sthāpaka* is mentioned. See the Diamond Jubilee Number of the ABORI (1978) p. 175.

[312] See above, n. 292. Cf., e.g., DR. 3.16.

"The the *prarocanā* is performed. (Then), however, an "invitation" with *siddham* is performed
– for success of the performance – which mentions the subject of the play".

From *kartavyā* and *kāryam* we may infer that the invitation is different from the preceding *prarocanā*. If, however, the audience was addressed at this moment, this would imply that the "invitation", which "defined" the plot, had a similar function as the subsequent *prastāvanā*, the prologue of the play. *upanimantraṇa* + instr. is common in the sense "invitation with, offer of". That *siddhena* (Ghosh: "expert") must actually be construed with *upanimantraṇa* is apparent from 5.29–30:

upakṣepeṇa kāryasya hetuyuktisamāśrayā
siddhenā 'mantraṇā yā tu vijñeyā sā prarocanā
"An invitation with *siddham*, based on reasoning and arguments (?) by alluding to the (following) action, is known as *prarocanā*".

For *kāryasya* C (against *kāvyasya* Abhinavagupta, Śāradātanaya) cf. 21.98 and n. 329. Abhinava I, p. 219, 12 here explains *siddhena* by *siddhyo 'palakṣitam*. However, later theorists confuse this *pūrvaraṅga-prarocanā* with both the *prastāvanā* and the *vimarśasaṁdhi-prarocanā* (which during the "crisis" points ahead to the denouement, NŚ. 21.96). See also T. Venkatacharya, Rasārṇavasudhākara (forthcoming), p. 342f. Thus the definition of the latter *prarocanā* in DR. 1.47 is *siddhāmantraṇato bhāvidarśikā syāt prarocanā*, which is made up of NŚ. 5.30 and 21.96. Śāradātanaya's interpretation as *āmantraṇaṁ yat sādhyasya siddhavat* "*announcement* of (future events) as though they had already taken place", however, would seem excluded for *siddhena* at NŚ. 5.30. In other words, *āmantraṇa* has here a new meaning, different from NŚ. 5.30. On the other hand, the two definitions of Ch. V are strikingly different from the third in 22.27 (cf. Sāgaranandin 1070/114):

jayany udayinī caiva maṅgalyā vijayāvahā
sarvapāpapraśamanī pūrvaraṅge prarocanā
"The *prarocanā* which occurs in the *pūrvaraṅga* serves to attain success, prosperity, good luck, victory and extinction of all sins".

According to this definition the "Recommendation" (*prarocanā*) was a religious act, not a prologue. If it did contain an "invitation", who exactly were addressed? Not before the end of the 10th century do we find the interpretation "appeal to the audience". Cf. Abhinavagupta (I^2, p. 219 line 11f.) *tena kāvyopakṣepeṇa hetubhūtena tadviṣaye sāmājikānāṁ yā āmantraṇā, nimantraṇam*. About the same time Dhanaṁjaya (between 974 and 996 A.D.) wrote (Daśarūpaka 3.6) *unmukhīkaraṇaṁ yatra praśaṁsātaḥ prarocanā*, which Dhanika explains as *prastutārthapraśaṁsanena śrotṝṇāṁ pravṛttyunmukhīkaraṇam*. Somewhat later Śāradātanaya, BhPr. p. 197, 16–17 paraphrased it by *prarocanā sā yatraiva prakhyātodāttavastunaḥ, praśaṁsayā prekṣakāṇāṁ unmukhīkaraṇaṁ tu yat* "where

the attention of the audience is drawn by the praise of a well-known and elated subject" and p. 228, 20–21 *prekṣakādy-unmukhīkāraḥ prastutārtha-praśaṁsayā, prarocanā sā 'Śrīharṣo Nipuṇe 'tyādino 'cyate* (the last words of which refer to Dhanika's quotation from the Ratnāvalī).

It is necessary to stress the fact that the current view, which holds that the Prarocanā aimed at "exciting interest by praising an author in the prologue of a drama" (Monier-Williams) is, first of all, incorrect in that the Prarocanā had originally no connection with the Prologue. And secondly, this view is exclusively based on the word *unmukhīkaraṇam* in a definition written at a time (between 974 and 996 A.D.), when there was not even a faint memory of the Prarocanā. This can be seen from the fact that Dhanaṁjaya's brother (?) and commentator illustrated Daśar. 3.6 by a quotation (Ratnāvalī 1.5) which is, in fact, a stanza from the Prastāvanā! This is, of course, fully intelligible because at that time next to nothing had survived of the old *pūrvaraṅga* and no information could be found in old manuscripts, since the ritual had never formed part of the play. As Sylvain Lévi (Le théâtre indien I, p. 379) saw long ago, all difficulties are due to the fact that the theorists continued to pay lip-service to Bharata and to copy his directions, even though nothing corresponded any longer to them in the practice of their time.

If, then, we put aside the evidence of Dhanaṁjaya and the later theorists and confine ourselves to the only and last testimony about the Prarocanā, which is found in the Nāṭyaśāstra, we are faced with the contradiction between 22.27, which describes it as a ritual, and the two passages in Chapter V – one of the oldest chapters, in my opinion, of the whole work –, which include in the definition an allusion to the following play. In 5.141 this is formulated as a kind of "afterthought", which does not form part of the definition of the preceding line. In 5.29–30, however, the two definitions seem to have been amalgamated into one, or, to put it in a more neutral way, the aspects that are discernible in 5.141, are here inseparable. Clearly, these facts admit of different explanations. I am fully aware of the fact that in the following account an element of circular argumentation cannot be avoided. The *pūrvaraṅga* is a religious ceremony in which only the gods are addressed, but nowhere the audience. This makes it very unlikely that *āmantraṇā* and *upanimantraṇam* can mean an appeal to the audience; nor can *āmantraṇā*, for that reason and in view of the apparently synonymous word *upanimantraṇa*, have meant a "farewell" of the *sūtradhāra*. An "invitation" addressed to the *sthāpaka*, who was to introduce the play after the completion of the *pūrvaraṅga* is not likely either, if it is correct that the *sthāpaka* was the same person as the *sūtradhāra*. On the other hand although *āmantrayati* is sometimes used in a context where a god is addressed (e.g., ŚB. IX.1.2.16), our text would no doubt have been more specific if this had been meant in these two passages. No convincing interpretation, therefore, can in my opinion be proposed for the two words. There remains, then, the second question: Is it likely that the *prarocanā* had originally the function of "alluding to" (5.29) or "explaining"

(5.139) the plot? Not only the character of the *pūrvaraṅga*, as described in the preceding pages, but also the fact that it was the task of the *sthāpaka* to introduce the play lead to the conclusion that this definition of the Prarocanā must have arisen at a time, when the distinction between *pūrvaraṅga* and the play was no longer fully maintained. For the same reason, then, the allusion to the play in the Trigata must be considered alien to the original character of this episode. It will be clear that this conclusion cannot be drawn from the material but rests entirely on a general theory of the *pūrvaraṅga*.

14. THE TRIGATA II

The following attempt to interpret the character of the old Trigata will be based exclusively on the data of ch. V of the Nāṭyaśāstra. All theories, therefore, which derive the Trigata and the vidūṣaka from the mime[313], or which hold that the Trigata and the Prarocanā had a profane character[314] and that the *vidūṣaka* had only secondarily intruded from the *pūrvaraṅga* into the play, there to become the friend and companion of the *nāyaka*[315], will be left out of consideration. They are all based on the premise that the *vidūṣaka* was, and had always been, a buffoon ("lustige Person, Hanswurst") and hence had necessarily originated in the "popular theatre" (about which nothing is known) and could not have had a religious origin[316]. They all disregard the fact that the only Sanskrit drama that we know of belonged to court art and was performed in a theatre whose religious character is beyond dispute, and that the *vidūṣaka* according to the Nāṭyaśāstra had always been one of the three leading parts in this drama (cf. Pischel, Puppenspiel, p. 17).

Let us first summarize a few conclusions of the preceding sections. The *pūrvaraṅga* has been shown to be, up to this Trigata, a religious ceremony (5.142 *vidhi*). The stage represented the world in its sacred aspect and the religious importance of the various acts, including the raising and worship of the *jarjara* and culminating in the *nāndī*, cannot be questioned. There is no indication to show that after the desecration of the Indra staff the character of the *pūrvaraṅga* had changed. As has been pointed out above, statements in the Nāṭyaśāstra to the effect that after the dismissal of the *jarjara* the acting with words and gestures was considered to begin (5.27 *raṅgadvāram*) and that at that moment the judges started evaluating the acting according to aesthetic standards (27.40) do not imply that this was the end of the ritual part – quite apart from the question as to when this aesthetic evaluation may have been introduced. As for the late passage 32.460, which says that the *nāṭyadvāram*

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[313] Thieme, "Indisches Theater", p. 40, Feistel, pp. 113, 120, 131.

[314] E.g., Thieme, p. 40, Feistel, p. 116.

[315] Feistel, pp. 105, 125.

[316] Feistel, although accepting Thieme's theory (p. 120), admits that the argument of the participation of the *vidūṣaka* is "nur bedingt beweiskräftig" (p. 119).

(beginning of the acting?) was at the end of the *pūrvaraṅga*[317], this may date from a time when the seemingly clownish and meaningless Trigata and the Prarocanā, which had become a useless double of the Prastāvanā, were skipped. There can be no doubt, however, about their having been the last parts of the *pūrvaraṅga*[318].

As we have seen, in the first part of the pūrvaraṅga the two attendants had been characterized by the sacred objects they were carrying as impersonations of Indra and Varuṇa, and thus as standing for the two cosmic moieties. During the *jarjaraprayoga* and the *nāndī* they were clearly subordinate to the *sūtradhāra*. In the Trigata they are still so but now the active role is theirs.

In interpreting the relevant passage (5.137–140) we are faced with the text-critical problem that it contains several lines which occur in a few manuscripts only and must therefore be considered interpolations. As a rule such interpolations are either amplifications or corrections, dating from a later time and reflecting changes in the practice of the dramatic performance. Since, however, there is no appreciable contradiction between the lines of this passage, use has been made of the whole passage as it appears in C., even though the text-critical basis on which 5.140 rests seems to be slender. It has been adopted in B KM and C but was rejected by Grosset. As we shall see, something more special can be said about it.

The characteristic point of the interpolated verses 5.139 and 140 is that they seem to describe the intermezzo of the *pāripārśvika* and the *vidūṣaka* in terms of a formal disputation according to the terminology of the oldest stage of the *vāda*-doctrine that is known to us. As G. Oberhammer, WZKSO. 7 (1963), p. 63ff. has shown, the oldest passage preserved, viz. Caraka-Saṁhitā III.8.28, is merely "ein Organon für die Disputation", the disputation being divided into two parts, the *jalpa* and the *vitaṇḍā*. In the *jalpa* each of the opponents defends his thesis, e.g., one defends the thesis that there is transmigration, while the other argues that there is not. In contrast with the *jalpa*, in which each party uses arguments, the *vitaṇḍā* "only consists in criticizing the opponent" (*jalpaviparyayo vitaṇḍā. vitaṇḍā nāma parapakṣe doṣavacanamātram eva*). The commentary of Cakrapāṇidatta (13th century) is here particularly interesting: *tena vitaṇḍāyām apy uttaravādinaḥ parapakṣadūṣaṇalakṣaṇaḥ pakṣo 'sty eva, paraṁ svamataṁ na sādhayatī 'ti bhedaḥ.*

In view of the term *sthāpita* in 5.140 it must be added that Caraka attaches a high importance to *sthāpanā* "establishment, dialectical proof of a proposition" and *pratiṣṭhāpanā* "counter-assertion, statement of a counter-thesis". They belong to the earliest stage of the *vāda*-doctrine and got out of use before the Nyāyasūtras (Oberhammer, pp. 73, 77f.), whereas *jalpa* and *vitaṇḍā* disappear after them (ibidem, p. 81 n. 40).

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[317] See above, p. 171.

[318] 5.15 *trikaṁ prarocanā cā 'pi pūrvaraṅge bhavanti hi* (16) *etāny aṅgāni kāryāṇi pūrvaraṅgavidhau tu ca* [but see Corrigenda p. 236: *trigataṁ prarocanā ca*].

Although no definite date can be fixed for this stage, it can hardly have been later than the first centuries of our era, accordingly the same period in which also the core of the Nāṭyaśāstra was presumably composed. The verses 5.139–140 thus define (redefine?) the "talk" of the Trigata both in terms of rhetoric (*gaṇḍa*, *nālikā*), the date of which remains to be settled, and as a formal disputation with the terminology of the oldest "*vāda*-tradition" (*vitaṇḍā*, *vidūṣita* and *sthāpita*). As for the word *saṁjalpa*, although it is a common term for "conversation, talk" in classical Sanskrit, Bharata (5.29, 140) distinguishes it from *saṁlāpa* (22.28). Is it used here in the sense of the old technical term *jalpa*?

A few words must be added on the term *sthāpita*, which is here used in a sense that is clearly different from *sthāpanā* in Caraka. Unlike the Vedic ritual *brahmodyas*, in which one of the two opponents automatically gained the victory when the other could no longer answer and remained silent (see J. C. Heesterman, WZKSO. 12–13 [1968], p. 171ff.), there is in this disputation a highest authority, who stands above the parties and gives his decision by "establishing" the words of the assistant (5.140, lacking in most manuscripts). Heesterman has already suggested that the "unsophisticated abuse and the equally artless praise" of the Vedic ritual may perhaps be considered "an early predecessor of the distinction between *jalpa* and *vitaṇḍā*" (p. 178). In view of the apparently religious origin of the Trigata I am inclined to think that this disputation in the presence of a "judge" was a direct reflex of the Vedic *vívāc* as a *social* phenomenon, which could be described in terms of the post-Vedic (*vi*)*vāda* because the latter was a direct continuation of the older verbal contest. Oberhammer (p. 81) has already concluded that the *sthāpanā* and *pratiṣṭhāpanā* must have belonged to a pre-Caraka stage, and that they were notions that were known from the practice of disputations. In Caraka the five categories of demonstration (*Beweisglieder*) are still elements of *sthāpanā* and *pratiṣṭhāpanā*. It seems to me that the Trigata preserves the older Vedic stage, in which *sthāpayati* had nothing to do with a logical proof but only with one's winning acceptance for one's contentions in a verbal contest. The decisive *sthāpanā* is here pronounced by the highest authority.

The preceding verse 5.138 quite suddenly introduces the *vidūṣaka* and refers to his incoherent speech. He had apparently the role of the *uttaravādin* in the later formalized *vitaṇḍā*. According to Cakrapāṇidatta the *uttaravādin* confined himself to criticizing (*dūṣaṇa*) the proposition of the opponent without proving his own (see notes 320, 391). Since the two assistants had remained all the time at the back of the stage and had now come again to the front (apparently without their paraphernalia), one of them must in the meantime have made himself recognizable as the *vidūṣaka*, probably by means of a make-up to which the text refers elsewhere (36.25 KM)[319]. It has been argued that the only assistant that

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[319] Ghosh's translation (p. 94) "During it the Jester should suddenly come in" is of course not based on what the text says.

can have functioned as such is the one who had carried the golden pitcher. If it is correct that the two assistants have all the time impersonated Indra and Varuṇa, this must still be the case, since nothing indicates that they have changed their former characters. Unfortunately it cannot be decided whether the Nāṭyaśāstra considers them "exalted" (*udātta*) or "non-exalted" (*anudātta*) characters. As far as I can see, however, the remarkable fact that the *vidūṣaka* speaks Sanskrit in this Trigata has never been given due attention. (See Abhinavagupta p. 219 l. 8 ad NŚ. 5.28–29!).

For a correct insight into the character of the disputation between the assistant and the *vidūṣaka* it may be well to call to mind that the consecration of the stage in chapter III, which shows some striking parallels to the *pūrvaraṅga*, ended with a fight which has been interpreted above as a re-enactment of the cosmogonical strife between Devas and Asuras. See p. 165 and cf. NŚ. 3.91–93. The disputation of the Trigata, too, has a strong element of contest. The *vidūṣaka* "criticizes" the words of his opponent. Although the authenticity of the reading *vidūṣakavidūṣita*, a variant of *-virūpita* "deformed" [320], is not certain (but see n. 391), it is obviously intended to give an etymological explanation of the word *vidūṣaka* (see n. 320) and in view of the archaic terminology preserved in these verses, there is no reason to question its correctness. See above on the *dūṣaṇa* of the *uttaravādin*. The *sūtradhāra*, who must have been standing between the two opponents, decides the contest by confirming ("establishing") the words of the assistant. The fact that the latter *must* be victorious is significant. It shows that this dispute was not simply an improvised comical intermezzo but a ritual act, such as, e.g., the Mahāvrata-ceremony, in which the Ārya (or Arya) *had* to defeat the Śūdra. Such a *verbal* contest (5.137 *bhāratībhede*!), as the Trigata obviously was, is strongly reminiscent of the verbal contest between Indra and Varuṇa in Rigveda IV.42. This was a cosmogonical *vívāc* [321] in which Varuṇa probably still (or again) [322] had his Asuric character. In other words, the contest of the Trigata between the leader of the Devas and the highest Asura is only a mythological variant of the cosmogonical strife between all Devas and Asuras, represented at the end of the consecration of the stage. In that consecration as well as in the *pūrvaraṅga* the ceremonies ended with a renewal of the cosmos by a reiteration of the primordial mythical fight.

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[320] See n. 293. *virūpita* is, it seems, first attested in the epics. It may originally have been a gloss for *vidūṣita*, which has later ousted the correct reading. It is important to note that *vidūṣayati* has been in use ever since the Rigveda so that it is quite possible that the word *vidūṣaka* was created in the Vedic period. For this type of formation cf. VS *gáṇaka* "astrologer": ep. *gaṇayati* (Debrunner, Altind. Grammatik II-2, p. 146f.). See further n. 355.

[321] See above, p. 22f. and cf. IIJ. 4, p. 270 n. 80b, Numen 8, p. 38. For a different interpretation of the hymn as referring to the royal consecration see H. Lommel, Festschrift Schubring p. 32ff., Schlerath, Das Königtum im Rig- und Atharvaveda (Wiesbaden, 1960), p. 160, J. Gonda, The dual deities in the rel. of the Veda (1974), pp. 234–248.

[322] See History of Religions 15, p. 116 on Varuṇa as a seasonal god.

As for the incoherent talk of the *vidūṣaka*, which evokes a smile of the *sūtradhāra* and which has greatly contributed to his being considered a buffoon in modern times, it may have its origin in the fact that the *vidūṣaka* must be defeated in a *verbal* contest. In the *vívāc*, the Vedic prototype of the *saṁjalpa*, the victorious speaker "outtalks" (*áti-vad-*, cf. *bṛhád vad-*) or "defeats" (*ji-*) his opponent by his successful speech [323]. Just as Indra *must* win the cosmogonical contest, it is the task of the sūtradhāra, who still impersonates Brahmā as the god of totality and who as such stands above the two parties, formally to confirm his victory.

The *vidūṣaka*'s negative role as criticizer of the assistant's speech should be noted because we find here the prototype, as it were, of the pattern of the relation between the *nāyaka* and the *vidūṣaka* in the plays (see p. 208).

The preceding interpretation of the Trigata was mainly based on one verse, which seems to have been added as an amplification to the older description and which, if I am not mistaken, is only found in one of the few manuscripts used for the edition of Baroda, the one written in Old Malayalam script. It does not, however, contradict the other verses and even though it is apparently an interpolation, it may contain an old and authentic tradition.

15. THE CHURNING OF THE OCEAN

According to the Nāṭyaśāstra the origin of the Sanskrit drama dates back to the mythical primordial time when Brahmā created the dramatical art and "composed" the first drama. The tale of the legendary first performance occurs in two versions, which are both instructive as they show us what, according to the Indian tradition, was the oldest form of drama.

The first version describes the performance by Bharata and his sons, on the occasion of Indra's banner festival. At that time no theatre had been built yet by the divine architect Viśvakarman. The sage Bharata tells the munis about this performance in the following words (1.57–58): "Thereupon [that is, after the *nāndī*, 1.56] I organized [324] an imitation [325]

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[323] Cf., e.g., II.1.16 *bṛhád vadema vidáthe suvîrāḥ* "May we with our valiant sons outtalk (our rivals)", VII.18.13 *jéṣma Pūrúṁ vidáthe mṛdhrávācam* "May we during the potlatch surpass Pūru who speaks injuriously" (see Indologica Taurinensia 2, p. 131), AB. VI.33.20 *ativādena vai devā asurān atyudyā 'thainān atyāyan* "by means of the Ativāda [AS. XX.135.4] the gods outspoke the Asuras and overcame them" (Keith), ŚB. XI.6.2.5 *té hocuḥ, áti vaí no 'yáṁ rājanyàbandhur avādīd dhántai 'naṁ brahmódyam āhváyāmahā íti* "They said, 'Surely, this fellow of a Rājanya has outtalked us: come, let us challenge him to a theological disputation!" (transl. Eggeling).

[324] *baddhā*: the PW. gives the meanings "Verse abfassen, componiren", "bewirken, hervorrufen" and "machen". Cf. 1.18 *saṁbaddha* = 1.4 *grathita*. Since "to compose" would seem excluded by the context, one might consider translating "I devised" (Ghosh). Abhinavagupta thinks that no *prayoga* can be meant here and takes it to mean that a *prastāvanā* was performed: *tatra ca baddhe 'ti guṇanikā yojitā, na tu prayoga ity, etac cā 'sat tatpūrvottaravyāghātāt* . . . (see n. 144), *tasmād baddhe 'ti prastāvitā; na tu niṣpāditā* ("performed"). *prastāvanā tāvat prayukte 'ty arthaḥ*. For

of how the Daityas were defeated by the gods, (which imitation) consisted of altercation[326] and tumult[327] and of cutting and piercing (of limbs) and roaring sounds"[328]. The second line has a more or less stereotyped character. See the parallels quoted in n. 245 and cf. 27.13

dīptapradeśaṁ kāvyaṁ yac chedyabhedyāhavātmakam
savidravam athau 'tpātaṁ tathā yuddhaniyuddhakam

which Ghosh translates "If the play has [a plot containing] burning hostility, cutting and piercing [of limbs], fight, portentous calamity, terrific happening or minor personal combat . . .[329].

According to this legend the first dramatical performance, after Brahmā had created the art as a fifth Veda, took place immediately after Indra's victory over the Daityas and Asuras and consisted of an imitation of his fight and victory. It is quite understandable that, while the gods were elated, the Asuras were disconcerted because (as we may add) this "imitation" was in fact a new defeat by magical-religious means. They therefore disturbed the performance by means of a host of "Obstacles" (*vighna*). This again induced Brahmā to order the building of a theatre as a sacred space, well defended all around against demoniacal attacks.

This first legend confronts us with two important facts: the first performance not only took place immediately after Indra's cosmogonical

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Brahmā's composing plays our text uses the terms 1.56, 111 *kṛta*, 1.19 *utpādayati*, 1.19, 4.12 *sṛṣṭa*, 4.3 *pragrathita*. Here a performance improvised by Bharata is referred to. Hence "staged, arranged the performance" rather than "devised" must be meant.

[325] See n. 247.

[326] *saṁpheṭa* "conflict". Cf. 22.61 "Conflict is known to include excitement, many fights, personal combats, deception, betrayal and much striking of weapons" (Ghosh) and 20.79 "angry conflict" (Ghosh). More succinct is the definition of Daśarūpaka 2.58 *saṁpheṭas tu samāghātaḥ kruddhasaṁrabdhayor dvayoḥ*, and similarly Sāh. D. 420=6.135. Sāgaranandin's definition (NLRK. 1380ff.-137+) is in accordance with this view: *saṁpheṭaś ca vīraraudrādbhutaprāyair yuktaḥ sasaṁbhramamayo yuddhaniyuddhabahulaḥ kapaṭamayaḥ śastraprapātaviṣayaḥ*, which he illustrates by a reference to the fight of the gods and Asuras in the *Samudramathana* and the hand-to-hand fighting and fighting with weapons (*bāhuyuddhair astrayuddhaiḥ*) of Indra and Vṛtra. Hence the translations "ungestümer Zusammenstoss" (Konow, p. 21), "fighting" (Keith, Sanskrit Drama, p. 328). This is supported by *saṁspheṭa*, *saṁsphoṭa* "war, battle" (comm. on Hemacandra) and *saṁpheṭaka* "drummer" (not listed in the lexica but occurring in Abhinavagupta I², p. 64 line 5 *kutapaḥ: saṁpheṭaka-gāyana-vādaka samūhaḥ*). However, the translation "leidenschaftlicher Wortwechsel" (PW, pw) has the support of Sāgaranandin 806 *roṣagrathitaṁ vākyaṁ saṁpheṭaḥ* "discussion conducted in anger". Cf. Drav. Et. Dict. 3601.

[327] *vidrava* "tumult" (Konow, p. 29, Ghosh, who also translates "excitement", cf. 20.79). Three kinds are traditionally distinguished, cf. 20.70, DR. 3.67, Sāh. D. 6.240 and Sāgaranandin, NLRK. 766 *śaṅkābhayatrāsakṛto vidravaḥ* "panic is caused by apprehension and fear and trembling" (M. Dillon, etc.); cf. 2811ff.

[328] See pp. 143 and 165.

[329] This is based on Ghosh's doubtful emendation *dīptapradveṣam*. Cf. 20.85 *dīptarasa* "with exciting sentiments", Mhbh. V.182.7 *krodhadīpta* "excited with anger". Different is 3.93 *kṣataṁ pradīptam āyastam*. Note *kāryam* B KM for *kāvyam*, and *athotphullam* B KM, *athātpātam* K for *athautpātam*.

fight (here apparently an annual re-iteration of the primordial fight, connected with the celebration of his banner festival) but it was itself a performance of this fight and therefore a creative act, a renovation of the world owing to the efficaciousness of imitation. A second conclusion that follows from this tale is that every dramatic performance has potentially a dangerous "magical" power which arouses the resistance of and obstruction by fiendish spirits. It will be remembered that the aim of the *nāndī*, for instance, was said to be "the appeasement of all obstacles" (see n. 254).

When the theatre has been built (1.81) and the consecration of a new playhouse has been described in detail (ch. III), the legendary tale is taken up again in 4.1: "After having thus carried out the *pūjana*, I said to the Grandfather (Brahmā): 'Give me now quickly your orders, O Lord, as to which play must be performed!' Thereupon the Holy One said to me: 'Perform the Churning of the Ocean. It stimulates efforts and is a powerful means of giving pleasure to the gods' "[330].

Again it is a cosmogonical fight – although of a special character, in which cooperation and competition go together – which is the theme of this performance. In contrast with the previous one in ch. I, which can only have been improvised by the actors, this one is said to have been a *samavakāra* (4.3), composed by Brahmā himself (4.4), which was performed to the delight of both gods and demons (4.4). It is somewhat surprising to find the latter here assembled together with the gods but the playhouse had only been built to safeguard the actors and the performance against evil influence of *fiendish powers* (1.76–79). On the other hand, Brahmā had consoled the enraged demons (or rather, their "Obstacles") by saying that the drama would represent acts and feelings of the demons no less than of the gods (1.105) and that it would be instructive for all (1.113).

The genre *samavakāra* must have become obsolete at an early date. Our knowledge, as well as that of later dramaturgists, is exclusively based on the definition of the Nāṭyaśāstra (20.64–65), which seems to describe the characteristics of a single play still known to the author, rather than those of a whole genre[331]. In Ghosh's translation this definition is as

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[330] 4.1 *evaṁ tu pūjanaṁ kṛtvā mayā proktaḥ Pitāmahaḥ, ājñāpaya prabho kṣipraṁ kaḥ prayogaḥ prayujyatām* (2) *tato 'smy ukto Bhagavatā yojayā 'mṛtamanthanam, etad utsāhajananaṁ suraprītikaraṁ mahat.*

[331] See S. Lévi, pp. 30, 143, 153 ("éteint avant la période classique"), Konow, p. 28f. ("Es ist nach alledem klar, dass Bharata ein bestimmtes Werk, und nicht eine ganze Gattung, vor Augen hatte, und seine Nachfolger haben einfach seine Definition wiedergegeben und zum Teil weiter ausgesponnen. Bh. 4.2f. nennt den samavakāra *Amṛtamanthana*, und dasselbe Werk ist gewiss mit em *Ambhodhimanthana* des Daśarūpa (3.58) und dem *Samudramathana* des Sāhityadarpaṇa (zu 6.240) gemeint.), Keith, p. 97 "that dubious kind of play", p. 291f. "the Samavakāra, for instance, is described in terms which, with the precise definition of the time to be occupied by the acts, can be interpreted only as based on a single drama", p. 353 etc. Only Sāgaranandin diverges in referring to a drama *Śakrānanda* (NLRK. 2812/355f.), but from his ample description (2811ff.) it is clear that he tried to identify some

follows: "It should have the [exploits of] gods and Asuras as its subject matter and one of them as its well-known and exalted Hero, and it is to consist of three Acts [presenting] the three kinds of deception, the three kinds of excitement or the three kinds of love. [Besides this] it should have as many as twelve *dramatis personae* and require a duration (lit. length) of eighteen Nāḍikās [for its performance]"[332]. In this translation the words "one of them as its well-known and exalted Hero", for which the first edition had "and an Asura as a well-known and exalted character as its Hero", can hardly be correct. The text clearly says that there are twelve *nāyakas*, who are all traditionally well-known and exalted characters. The implication is, as Abhinavagupta explicitly states, that there was no *vidūṣaka* in this play[333].

The *samavakāra* was a sub-class of the *āviddha* type of play, which is described as follows (14.56–59, cf. 35.53–56): "The play which requires energetic (*āviddha*) gestures and dance movements (*aṅgahāra*) to represent cutting, piercing and challenging, and contains the use of magic and occult powers as well as artificial objects and make-up, (57) and has more men and less women [among its *dramatis personae*] and applies [in its production] mostly the Grand [*Sāttvatī*] and the Violent [*Ārabhaṭī*] Styles, is of the energetic type. (58) According to the [expert] producers, [plays of] the Ḍima, the Samavakāra, the Vyāyoga and the Īhāmṛga [classes] are known to be of the energetic type. (59) Production of a play of this type should be made by [an impersonation of] gods, Dānavas and Rākṣasas who are majestic and haughty, and have heroism, energy and strength" (Ghosh)[334]. In this definition of the more comprehensive category, too, the presence of demons is stressed, even though Ghosh's translation of the last two lines is not very exact[335].

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passages in the dramas known to him as instances of the *samavakāra*. On the question as to whether Bhāsa's Pañcarātra is a *samavakāra* see Konow, p. 29, Keith, pp. 96f., 346, Ghosh, Transl. I, p. 363 n. For an explanation of the name see, e.g., Dhanika ad Daśarūpaka 3.62 *samavakīryante 'sminn arthā iti samavakāraḥ*, accordingly an overwhelming by fate.

[332] *devāsurabījakṛtaḥ prakhyātodāttanāyakaś caiva, tryaṅkas tadā* (*tathā* KM.) *trikapaṭas trividravaḥ syāt triśṛṅgāraḥ* (65) *dvādaśanāyakabahulo hy aṣṭādaśanāḍikāpramāṇaś ca* . . . Cf. DR. 3.62–68 and SD. 6.234–239, which will be discussed below.

[333] Abhinavagupta I², p. 32 line 11 (ad NŚ. 1.97) has the following comment: *hāsyaśṛṅgārāṅgatvād "vidūṣakam" ity uktam, ata eva daśarūpakaprayogasūcanam etat, samavakāre vidūṣakābhāvāt.*

[334] *sattvāviddhāṅgahāraṁ tu cchedyabhedyāhavātmakam, māyendrajālabahulaṁ pustanepathyasaṁyutam* (57) *puruṣair bahubhir yuktam alpastrīkaṁ tathaiva ca, sāttvatyārabhaṭīprāyaṁ nāṭyam āviddhasaṁjñitam* (58) *ḍimaḥ samavakāraś ca vyāyoge 'hāmṛgau tathā, etāny āviddhasaṁjñāni vijñeyāni prayoktṛbhiḥ* (59) *eṣāṁ prayogaḥ kartavyo daitya-dānava-rākṣasaiḥ, uddhatā ye ca puruṣāḥ śaurya-vīrya-balānvitāḥ.* The same text recurs in 35.53C¹, 26.28B, where C has *yat tv āviddhāṅgahāntaṁ* as the initial words, *yat tv* (v. l. *tatra*) *āviddhāṅgahāraṁ tac* 13.54 KM., *na cā' vidyāṅgabhāvas tu* (!) p. 654 line 1 KM.

[335] A more literal translation would be: "These *genres* must be performed by Daityas, Dānavas and Rākṣasas and by men who are dominating personalities and have heroism, courage and strength". For *chedyabhedyāhavātmakam* see above n. 245.

The subject-matter of the Samavakāra is, accordingly, the *devāsura*, which the later dramaturgists took as a dvandva "gods and Asuras" [336] but which the author may have meant in the Vedic sense "fight between Devas and Asuras, well-known (from tradition)" [337].

If the general opinion that the composer of these lines has based his definition on a single play is correct, it can be concluded that he still knew a Samavakāra which represented the fight of Devas and Asuras and had twelve "famous and exalted heroes", who, then, must have been partly gods and partly Asuras. This conclusion is indeed drawn by the author of the Daśarūpaka [338]. This definition is perfectly in line with the situation found in the Churning of the Ocean, where the chief gods and Asuras, all "famous and exalted", took turns pulling the rope of the churn-staff, thereby symbolizing the *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* of the cosmic creative process (see n. 209). This situation excluded, however, the presence of other characters and it remains obscure why the commentator of the Daśarūpaka introduced a new element by adding "etcetera" after "Devas and Asuras" [339].

The number of twelve heroes is not exceptional for one of the old and extinct genres. For two other genres of the *āviddha* type, viz. the Ḍima and the Īhāmṛga, a late theorist mentions the numbers of sixteen and ten (or six) heroes respectively [340]. They differed, however, from the Samavakāra in that, e.g., in the Īhāmṛga the three leading parts were the hero (*nāyaka*), his antagonist (*pratināyaka*) and a woman, whereas in the Samavakāra there seem to have been no protagonists. All heroes, probably six Devas and six Asuras, were on an equal footing and they all pursued their own purposes [341].

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[336] Cf. DR. 3.63 *khyātaṁ devāsuraṁ vastu*, SD. 6.234 *vṛttaṁ samavakāre tu khyātaṁ devāsurāśrayam*, NLRK. 2811 (355+) *sa ca devāsuravīryakṛtaḥ*.

[337] Cf., e.g., JB. I. 247 lines 6 and 9.

[338] Dhanaṁjaya 3.63 *netāro devadānavaḥ* (64) *dvādaśo 'dāttavikhyātāḥ phalaṁ teṣāṁ pṛthak pṛthak, bahuvīrā rasāḥ sarve yadvad ambhodhimanthane*. Similarly SD. 6.240 *yathā samudramathanam*. These late theorists may simply repeat an old tradition and combine NŚ. 20.63ff. with 4.2 (see above n. 331) but the detailed description of SD. is anyway remarkable.

[339] Cf. Dhanika ad DR. 3.63 *devāsurādayo dvādaśa nāyakāḥ*. It is not clear what he had in mind. The two editions of the Sāhityadarpaṇa accessible to me, viz. the one by Pandit Durgāprasād Dvivedi and Kāśīnāth Pandurang Parab (Bombay 1902) and by Kṛṣṇamohan Śāstrī (Benares, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 2nd ed. 1955) both read in 6.235 *nāyakā dvādaśo 'dāttāḥ prakhyātā devamānavāḥ*. The commentator Rāmacaraṇa Tarkavāgīśa Bhaṭṭācharya (1544 A.D.) glosses this reading by *divyādivyāḥ* but quotes a variant reading *devadānavāḥ*, which does not seem to occur any longer in modern manuscripts. The curious reading *-mānavāḥ* is possibly due to the definition of the general category of the *āviddha*, of which the *samavakāra* was a sub-group. In the *āviddha*-category *puruṣas* did occur. This may have led to the assumption of human heroes in the *samavakāra*, too.

[340] See SD. 6.243 *ṣoḍaśā 'tyantam uddhatāḥ* and for the Īhāmṛga 6.248 *patākānāyakā divyā martyā vāpi daśo 'ddhatāḥ* and 250.

[341] DR. 3.64 *phalaṁ teṣāṁ pṛthak pṛthak*, which the commentator Dhanika illustrates with the words "just as in the Churning of the Ocean Vāsudeva etc. won Lakṣmī etc." (*yathā Samudramanthane Vāsudevādīnāṁ Lakṣmyādilābhaḥ*).

In this connection there is certainly, in the light of the origin of the Greek drama, some reason to raise a point to which, as far as I can see, little attention has been given by students of the Sanskrit drama. Greek tradition has preserved the memory of the exact time when the drama was born, as the first protagonist stepped forward as a separate actor, to speak and act as an individual against the anonymous collectivity of the chorus. The question must be raised if something similar may have happened in India and if in the Samavakāra with its twelve heroes the prototype of later forms of drama, with a *nāyaka* and a *nāyikā*, has been preserved. Perhaps it will never be possible to answer that question in a satisfactory way. I do not think that we are at this moment, with the available evidence, in a position to discuss it exhaustively. I will, therefore, confine myself to the following brief comment.

Although in Greece as well as in India the drama has developed from a religious *drōmenon*, there is a clear difference. To begin with, the Samavakāra was different from the chorus because the actors were not an anonymous collectivity. The twelve heroes are described as well-known personalities, each trying to fulfill his own desires. Just as in modern illustrations of the Churning of the Ocean each god and Asura is marked with his own name, so they were in the ancient play *khyāta*, "renowned" and "well-known", that is, recognizable for the audience as individuals. Secondly, the cosmogonical strife which they are said to have represented was ever since Vedic times described in a twofold way. While in the Rigveda Devas and Asuras as groups remain in the background, the fight being primarily depicted as one between two protagonists (particularly Indra and Vṛtra), the later brāhmaṇas mostly ignore Indra's individual exploit and use the fixed formula (with slight differences from one *śākhā* to another) "The Devas and Asuras were at strife" (*devāś ca 'surāś ca paspṛdhire* [*aspardhanta, ayatanta, saṁyattā āsan*, etc.]) [342]. There are no indications to show that one way of presenting the sacred history was anterior to the other. In the light of this fact, the absence of the *vidūṣaka* in the Samavakāra is no more surprising than that of the *nāyaka*. If we are right in identifying them with Varuṇa and Indra respectively, both were present among the (six) Devas and (six) Asuras. There was no need, therefore, for them to act separately, disguised as special characters of the drama. It is true that in some forms of the classical drama the *vidūṣaka* does not occur either. This, however, is a different problem which will be discussed separately in § 17, after the character of the *vidūṣaka* has been examined more closely.

To conclude this section a point may be raised which, it is hoped, will show that reasonable guesses are sometimes possible in these matters, even though they cannot be definitely proved with the help of our sources. This point is the place on the stage occupied by the two parties during the performance of the Churning of the Ocean. It has been suggested above that at the moment when, at the beginning of the *pūrvaraṅga*, the

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[342] For references see, e.g., S. Lévi, La doctrine du sacrifice p. 44 n. 1, 45ff.

sūtradhāra entered with his two assistants, the *jarjaradhara* must have gone on his right and the *bhṛṅgāradhāra* must have been on his left. In the same way the relative positions of Devas and Asuras as the higher and the lower group must necessarily have involved that the first stood right of the centre (the *brāhma maṇḍala*) and the latter on its left. What was "right" and what "left" was determined by the *nāṭyācārya*, the stage-manager, while he was standing on the stage and looking towards the audience. It may be assumed that the situation in India was in this respect not much different from that in Indonesia and Malaysia, where in the *wayang purwa* (shadow play) all the characters of the "noble type" are on the right of the *ḍalang* (puppet handler) and those of "violent type" on his left [343].

16. THE CHARACTER OF THE VIDŪṢAKA IN THE SANSKRIT DRAMA

Although much has been written on the part of the *vidūṣaka* [344], it is remarkable that most scholars have started from a premise which to them was apparently so self-evident as to be in no need of being stated explicitly, viz. that the vidūṣaka was a clown ("Spassmacher, Hanswurst"), who *therefore* could not originally have belonged to the drama. The further conclusion was that in that case he must have originated in a "popular

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[343] See W. H. Rassers, "Over den oorsprong van het Javaansche tooneel", Bijdragen Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde 88 (1931), pp. 338, 360, 363, who mentions the terms *wayang tengen* (on the right of the ḍalang) and *wayang kiwa* (on his left).

[344] Sylvain Lévi, Le théâtre indien (Paris 1890), p. 122f., [Francesco Cimmini, Il tipo comico del Vidūṣaka (Napoli 1893), not accessible to me], J. Huizinga, De vidūṣaka in het indisch tooneel (1897), Montgomery Schuyler, "The origin of the Vidūṣaka and the Employment of this character in the plays of Harṣadeva", JAOS. 20 (1899), p. 333ff., R. Pischel, Die Heimat des Puppenspiels (1900), p. 17ff., A. Hillebrandt, "Über die Anfänge des indischen Dramas", Sitzungsber. d. kön. bay. Akad. d. Wiss. Philos.-philol. und histor. Klasse, Jahrg. 1914, 4. Abhandlung pp. 24–26, M. Winternitz, Geschichte der indischen Litteratur III (1922), pp. 171, 172 n. 2 (references), 176, 178 n. 1, J. Hertel, "Der Ursprung des indischen Dramas und Epos", *WZKM.* 18, pp. 59f., 137f., 24, p. 118, S. Konow, Das indische Drama (Berlin-Leipzig 1920), p. 14, A. B. Keith, The Sanskrit Drama (1924), pp. 39f., 50f. (references p. 51 n. 1) and passim (see index), D. R. Mankad, Types of Sanskrit Drama (Karachi 1936), p. 211ff., J. Gonda, "Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung und Wesen des indischen Dramas", Acta Orientalia 19 (1943), pp. 329ff. (especially pp. 395–417), [R. V. Jagirdar, Drama in Sanskrit Literature, Bombay 1947], [J. T. Parikh, The Vidūṣaka: Theory and Practice, Surat 1953], G. K. Bhat, The Vidūṣaka (Ahmedabad, 1959), passim, Henry W. Wells, The Classical Drama of India (Bombay, 1963), p. 14ff., Paul Thieme, "Das indische Theater" in Fernöstliches Theater (ed. H. Kindermann, 1966), pp. 38, 50, 53f., etc., Paul Horsch, Die vedische Gāthā- und Śloka-Literatur (Bern 1966), p. 343, H.-O. Feistel, Das Vorspiel auf dem Theater (no place, 1969), pp. 119f., 125, The same, "The pūrvaraṅga and the chronology of pre-classical Sanskrit theatre", Samskrita Ranga Annual VI (Special felicitation volume in honour of Dr. V. Raghavan, Madras 1972), pp. 7f., 14, S. Weeratunge, "Some Remarks on the Vidūṣaka and Imagery in Sanskrit Drama", Añjali (O. H. de A. Wijesekera Felicitation Volume, Peradeniya 1970), pp. 182–184. Cf. also Louis Renou, La recherche sur le théâtre indien depuis 1890 (Paris 1964), p. 29 n. 4, J. C. Heesterman, Spel der Tegenstellingen (Leiden 1964), p. 23 n. 39 and J. Clifford Wright, Non-Classical Sanskrit Literature (London 1966), p. 21.

drama", about which, however, nothing is known. It is, of course, possible to assume by way of hypothesis that such a popular dramatic art once existed but it is clear that further conjectures about its character necessarily lack any foundation. Such theories are particularly hazardous if they are construed on the analogy of the 18th century "Possentheater" in Germany. Some authors, indeed, went so far as to define the character of the hypothetical popular theatre as a mime (e.g. M. Schuyler 1899, p. 338, Hillebrandt 1914, p. 26, Konow 1920, p. 14f.). The theory of a popular drama, again, created the further dilemma as to whether or not this drama had had a religious origin, a question that Hillebrandt 1914, p. 27, left open.

It may be useful to state clearly that this whole scholarly discussion, which in German-speaking countries was dominated by the word "volkstümlich" as the *vitium originis*, was primarily based upon a questionable conception of the character of the *vidūṣaka*. The problems with which several generations have struggled, such as the question "popular or not?", "religious or non-religious?", "mime or something else?" are modern constructions, which can be ignored when an attempt is made to interpret the data of the Nāṭyaśāstra. It is characteristic that some modern scholars, while accepting some of the theories, felt compelled to make an important reservation as to the foundation upon which they were built. Thus Winternitz 1922, p. 172, remarks about the *vidūṣaka* "Im Nāṭyaśāstra wird er viel grotesker beschrieben, als er in unsern Dramen erscheint. In manchen der klassischen Dramen tritt das Groteske fast ganz zurück und die Freundestreue viel mehr in den Vordergrund". Hillebrandt 1914, p. 27, had already observed that the description of the *vidūṣaka* in NŚ. 24.106 differs from his character in later texts such as Aśvaghoṣa's drama and rather resembles a kind of devil.

Thieme, p. 53[345], has elaborated the theory of an original mime, in which the *vidūṣaka* did not take part in the action. The latter was not, accordingly, a *dramatis persona* but a member of the troupe, whose natural place can only have been in the "Vorspiel" (*pūrvaraṅga*). In the course of time, however, he became for unknown reasons mixed up in the play, as an actor who had to play his part. Since the approach of the present study is entirely different, there is no use in amply discussing here Thieme's ingenious theory. It has already been observed that the assumption of the mime has no foundation in historical data. It may be added as a general remark that in many modern studies on the Sanskrit drama a somewhat confusing use is made of the term "Preliminaries" or "Vorspiel", in so far as the introduction to the play (the *āmukha* or *prastāvanā*) is insufficiently distinguished from the *pūrvaraṅga*, which stood apart as a religious ceremony.

Feistel, p. 125, has elaborated Thieme's theory in a different way. He suggests that the introduction (*āmukha*) has arisen in imitation of the Trigata of the *pūrvaraṅga*. This is very well possible. According to

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[345] See also pp. 38, 40, 43, 50.

NŚ. 22.28 the *āmukha* consists of a conversation of the *sūtradhāra* with either an actress or the *vidūṣaka* or the assistant (*pāripārśvika*). The fact that the two characters of the Trigata here return with the same names, but now in a profane function, may be considered a strong indication that the *āmukha* was somehow a continuation of the preceding Trigata. This *āmukha* was not, however, a Three Men's Talk and the fact that one of the two characters of the Trigata could be used as a partner in the conversation of the Introduction may have been due to simple practical considerations. After the exit of the three as impersonations of the divine world and the *sūtradhāra*'s renewed entrance as *sthāpaka* or *prastāvaka*, it was a convenient device to take one of the assistants as a partner in the dialogue (as is sometimes done in the prologues of Bhāsa's plays). There was, however, nothing to prevent an actress taking his place. It is hard to find in the facts an argument for Feistel's assumption that in the *āmukha*, once it existed as such, the actress was introduced as a new element. Still harder is it to conceive how the actress, after she had been admitted to the Prologue, could have ousted the *vidūṣaka* from it. The further hypothetical development, in which the *vidūṣaka*, after being ousted from the *āmukha*, became one of the three leading characters of the Indian drama, cannot well be visualized.

There is only one point in these theories which is rightly stressed by Thieme and others and which will have to be seriously considered in the context of this study. This is the absence of the *vidūṣaka* from the dramas with an epic subject-matter, the "genuine" *nāṭakas* ascribed to Bhāsa, and from one of Aśvaghoṣa's plays.

Against the current theory that the *vidūṣaka* originated in the popular mime the following arguments can be brought forward:

1. In the oldest Indian tradition, as found in ch. I of the Nāṭyaśāstra, the *vidūṣaka*, the *nāyaka* and the *nāyikā* are the only leading characters of the drama (1.96). Abhinavagupta's comment may here be quoted (I, p. 32 line 10): *pradhānapātrāṇi pṛthag rakṣaṇīyāni 'ty āha "nāyakam" iti* "Because the leading parts are in need of a personal protection, (the author) says *nāyakam* etc." (=1.96).

2. Ever since the oldest dramas extant the *vidūṣaka* is one of the *dramatis personae*. In two of Aśvaghoṣa's plays he acts already his traditional part. In the Śāriputraprakaraṇa he is the friend and companion of a monk, who is here the *nāyaka* (see n. 374).

3. The theory of a (non-religious) mime – of which no trace exists – [346]

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[346] See Keith (n. 344), p. 50f.: "The popular origin of the Vidūṣaka is obvious but the point is whether this origin is religious or secular . . . It is manifestly unnecessary and illegitimate, when the descent of this figure from the Vedic literature is clear, to insist that it was borrowed directly from popular usage, for which there is no proof, but only conjecture". Similarly Gonda (n. 344), p. 403f.: "Warum, schliesslich, soll man . . . diese Typen als "volkstümlich" bezeichnen, falls man mit diesem Adjektiv meinen möchte, dass sie anfangs zu profanen Bühnenaufführungen und Volksspielen gehörten (von denen wir aber nichts wissen) und aus diesen in das

is based on the interpretation of the *vidūṣaka* as a clownish character. As we have seen, several scholars have already expressed their doubts about the correctness of this interpretation of his part in the classical drama. In the preceding sections it has been argued that in the *pūrvaraṅga* the *vidūṣaka* is identical with the assistant who carries Varuṇa's golden pitcher in the Utthāpana (the second part of the *pūrvaraṅga*) and represents the nether world in the Trigata. In the latter his relation to the other assistant is structurally similar to that of the *bhṛṅgāradhāra* to the *jarjaradhara*. The fact that as *vidūṣaka* he speaks Sanskrit (overlooked by Abhinavagupta ad 5.28 B *vidūṣakaveṣabhāṣācāro*!) would seem significant.

4. The so-called grotesque character ascribed to the *vidūṣaka* in the Nāṭyaśāstra (Winternitz, p. 172, Thieme, p. 50, etc.) is mainly based on the description of his make-up in the Nāṭyaśāstra [347].

It is true that this text in some passages (to be discussed below) does refer to his comical (*hāsya*) appearance, but the reason for his strange appearance (described in the Nāṭyaśāstra in such detail as can hardly have been actually represented on the stage) will become clear from § 18. There must, indeed, have been a wide gap between the theory of the prescriptions of the Handbook and the practice of the dramatic performances. One indication is that according to the Nāṭyalocana [348] the *vidūṣaka* must wear a turban, like the ministers, chamberlains, big merchants and the chaplain, whereas the Nāṭyaśāstra prescribes that he must be bald.

Although it will be shown that the curious appearance of the *vidūṣaka*, as described in the Handbook, had not originally any connection with the stage nor aimed at a comic effect, it cannot be denied that in the classical drama his behaviour was intended to evoke laughter. Cf. Śāradātanaya, p. 289,2 *vidūṣako 'pi sarvatra vinodeṣū 'payujyate. Terms*, however, in which his clownish character is expressed, do not appear before the ninth century A.D. Two different lines of tradition can be distinguished, one which uses *hāsyakārin*, *hāsyakṛt* and similar expressions, and another which uses the word *vaihāsika*.

Of the material that has come to my notice the following instances may be quoted.

Opferrituell aufgenommen worden sind?" and Horsch (n. 344), p. 343 n. 1: "Das Fehlen älterer Volksstücke macht seine Verbindung mit dem Hanswurst der Volksbühne (s. Konow) rein hypothetisch".

[347] See, e.g., Winternitz (n. 344), p. 172, Thieme, p. 50 and Bhat (n. 344), p. 21: "The Vidūṣaka appears in the preliminaries of a dramatic representation, known as *Pūrvaraṅga*, and provides laughter by his appearance, talk and gestures. This role that the Vidūṣaka plays is irrespective of the drama proper, which may or may not have contained comic elements. Its purpose is pure fun; and it must have been all the more necessary, we may presume, if the drama were of a serious or exalted type. The role of the Vidūṣaka in the preliminaries of the drama is determined solely by the psychological and social expectation of amusement by way of laughter . . .".

[348] Quoted by S. Lévi, II, p. 70 from Rāghavabhaṭṭa's Arthadyotanikā.

hāsyakārin, etc.: circa 850 Rudraṭa, Śṛṅgāratilaka I.31 (41) *krīḍāprāyo vidūṣakaḥ, svavapurveṣabhāṣādihāsyakārī svakarmavit* (vv.11. *ca karmavit, ca narmavit*), Kāvyālaṁkāra 12.15 *vidūṣakaḥ krīḍanīyakaprāyaḥ, nijaguṇa-yukto mūrkho hāsakarākāraveṣavacāḥ*, circa 975–1000: Dhanaṁjaya, Daśarūpaka 2.8 *hāsyakṛc ca vidūṣakaḥ* and Dhanika's commentary: *hāsyakārī vidūṣakaḥ, asya ca vikṛtākāraveṣāditvaṁ hāsyakāritvenaiva labhyate* (Schmidt: "Weil er der Spassmacher ist, so ergibt sich daraus, dass er sein Äusseres, seine Kleidung usw. entstellt"), c. 1175–1250: Śāradātanaya, Bhāvaprakāśa (GOS. p. 289) *hāsyānūkavibhūṣitaḥ* [Bhat, p. 48 "possessed of a funny sort of back-bone (that is, 'hunch-back')"], c. 1300 (?)–1350: Viśvanātha, Sāhityadarpaṇa 3.79 *karmavapurveṣabhā-ṣādyaiḥ, hāsyakaraḥ kalaharatir vidūṣakaḥ syāt svakarmajñaḥ* (cf. above Rudraṭa), Pratāparudrīya I.38 *hāsyaprāyo vidūṣakaḥ*, c. 1330 A.D.: Śiṅgabhūpāla, Rasārṇavasudhākara I.92 *vikṛtāṅgavacoveṣair hāsyakārī vidūṣakaḥ* [349]. As an anonymous quotation the last definition is found in Kavīndrācārya Sarasvatī's commentary Padacandrikā on the Daśa-kumāracarita (c. 1650), p. 42 line 8 (ed. Agashe, B. S. S.), where the Bhūṣaṇa reads *aṅgādiveṣavaikṛtyahāsyakārī vidūṣakaḥ* and the Laghudīpikā *saṁdhānanipuṇaś caiva hāsyakārī vidūṣakaḥ*.

vaihāsika ("jester, buffoon, actor in general" Apte, Dict.; Böhtlingk still quoted the lexicographers Halāyudha and Hemacandra as his only authorities). As we now know, it was in rather common use in classical Sanskrit. As a gloss for *vidūṣaka* it seems to have been used for the first time in the Kāmasūtra I.4.46 *ekadeśavidyas tu krīḍanako viśvāsyaś ca vidūṣakaḥ, vaihāsiko vā*. In VI.1.22 the *vaihāsika* is mentioned side by side with the *pīṭhamarda* "parasite": *bhāvajijñāsārthaṁ paricārakamukhān saṁvāhaka-gāyana-vaihāsikān gamye tadbhaktān vā praṇidadhyāt, tadabhāve pīṭhamardādīn*. The gloss of the commentary *vaihāsiko vidūṣakaḥ* raises questions that will be discussed in § 19. Murāri, Anargharāghava, p. 146, quotes the line *vaihāsikaḥ kelikaraḥ prahāsī ca vidūṣakaḥ*, which he attributes to Bharata (Lévi II, p. 19). On the great variety of verses which are assigned to the Nāṭyaśāstra see in general S. Lévi, p. 27. Murāri is generally supposed to have lived circa 900 A.D. The use of the word *vaihāsika* would seem to exclude that this line was actually taken from the Nāṭyaśāstra. On the other hand, a variant form *vaihasika*, not registered in any dictionary, occurs in Agnipurāṇa 339.40 *vidūṣako*

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[349] See K. H. Trivedi, The Nāṭyadarpaṇa of Rāmacandra and Guṇacandra, A critical Study (Ahmedabad 1966), p. 186 n. 3, who quotes this passage while summarizing the data of the ND in the words: "In short the Vidūṣaka is ludicrous in physical appearance, dress and speech". The Nāṭyadarpaṇa dates from about 1100–1150 A.D. Sylvain Lévi, II, p. 19 quotes the same text from Rāghavabhaṭṭa's commentary on the Śakuntalā, as taken from the Sudhākara. As for Śiṅgabhūpāla's date see S. K. De, Sanskrit Poetics I², p. 239, and for that of the Padacandrikā see Wilhelm Printz, KZ. 44 (1911), pp. 100, 104. Of unknown date is Nityanātha's Rasaratnahāra 54, which has been quoted as saying "Der vidūṣaka erregt Gelächter wegen der Entstellung seines Körpers, seiner Sprache und seiner Kleidung" (Richard Schmidt, Beiträge zur indischen Erotik, p. 146).

vaihasikaḥ. This is the reading in the text of Poona 1900 as well as in that of the Kashi Skt. Series 174, Varanasi 1966.

In contrast with these later theorists the Nāṭyaśāstra does not stress, as far as I can see, the clownish character of the *vidūṣaka* except in one passage. No importance, it seems, can be attached to the circumstance that this passage (13.137–142 C) is omitted in KM[350]. It deals with gait (*gati*) and distinguishes three kinds of comic effect (*hāsya*), which are specified according to a distinction well-known in the Handbook as *aṅga-vākya-kṛtam* and *nepathyajam* "produced by corporeal defects, by words and by the costume and make-up". This kind of distinction has become stereotyped since Rudraṭa and is also found in the discussion of success[351].

Apart from this passage I can only quote 27.8 C *vidūṣakocchekakṛtaṁ* (?) *bhavec chilpakṛtaṁ tu yat, atihāsyena tad grāhyaṁ prekṣakair nityam eva hi*[352] and 27.61 *bālā mūrkhā(s) striyaś caiva hāsyanepathyayoḥ sadā* (*viz. tuṣyanti*)[353]. The last passage can refer in general to *dāsas* and other characters, who have to be characterized by some deformity.

It is not necessary to discuss in this context the theory that the deformity of the *vidūṣaka* is connected with the superstitious belief that disfigured persons bring good luck[354].

After these preliminary remarks an attempt will be made to explain the *status* and the *function* of the *vidūṣaka* in classical drama. Only then his name may become clear. There is, it is true, a general agreement that *vidūṣaka* means "corrupter" ("Schlechtmacher, Schimpfer")[355] but this etymology does not explain very much, as long as it is not clear what exactly he "corrupts".

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[350] The passage occurs in B (12.137ff.) and KM[1] (12.121ff.). In KM[2] thirty lines have been omitted after 12.114, but neither the critical apparatus nor Kane, History of Sanskrit Poetics[4], p. 13 mentions this gap in the text. It is, therefore, probably due to mere inadvertency.

[351] While 27.3C mentions (*siddhiḥ*) *śārīrī vāṅmayā tathā*, 27.3B has *vāṅnaipathya-śarīrajā* and 27.2 KM *vāṅmanaḥkāyasaṁbhūtā*. See further below, p. 217.

[352] The correct reading of the first word is very doubtful, see below, p. 216. For *śilpa* see Ghosh, Translation, foot-note: "For example, the art of comic make-up" and NŚ. 27.58, where *śilpa* occurs beside *nepathya*.

[353] For this stereotyped group see IIJ. 16, p. 243 n. 10.

[354] Gonda, pp. 410–416.

[355] See in general Gonda (n. 344), p. 402f., K. H. Trivedi, The Nāṭyadarpaṇa, p. 187, and cf. PW. ("Verunglimpfer"), Konow, p. 14 ("Schimpfer"), Keith, p. 39 ("given to abuse" and n. 2 on "ritual cathartic cursing"), Gonda, p. 416 ("Tadler, Schimpfer, derjenige, der jem. oder etw. in den Augen anderer schlecht macht"), the *vidūṣaka* being "gewissermassen eine Verschmelzung des Hoffnarrtypus und des apotropäischen Phthonoswehrers"), A. N. Upadhye, Candralekhā (Bombay 1945), Introduction, p. 26f. ("The name Vidūṣakaḥ is just a hyper-Sanskritic back-formation of Prakrit *viuso* or *viusao* [with *k*-suffix] which is to be connected with *vidvas*"), similarly J. C. Wright (n. 344), p. 21, whose remark on "the highly stereotyped figure of the pedant (Sanskritized *vidūṣaka*, i.e. *vidús*, Pkt. *vidū*)" is based on a misconception of the character of the *vidūṣaka*, G. K. Bhat (n. 344), p. 88 ("one who has a characteristic mode of fault-finding, or spoiling, with a view to evoking laughter"). Thieme, p. 38, conjectured "Verpatzer" (gambling away).

As for his social status in general, several theories have been proposed, all necessarily without any foundation in facts. It may be sufficient to mention the not uncommon views that he was used by the dramatists as a persiflage of the brahmins [356], or that the court-jester had stood model for him [357]. All such theories disregard the undeniable fact that actually we know the *vidūṣaka* exclusively as a stage character. This cannot be due to a deficient knowledge of urban life in ancient India. His purported role in Indian society will be examined in § 19. Here we will first try to answer the question as to what can be learnt about the status of the *vidūṣaka* in the only surroundings where we meet him, that is, in Sanskrit drama.

Status in the drama. It is curious that seldom attention seems to have been given to the fact that according to the Nāṭyaśāstra the *vidūṣaka* is the only character on the stage who meets the king on an equal footing. This follows as an inevitable conclusion from the circumstance that the king and the *vidūṣaka* address each other as "friend" (*vayasya*), which is a form of address that is exclusively permitted between people of equal standing [358]. This throws a new and unexpected light on Abhinava's statement that the *nāyaka* and the *vidūṣaka* are the two male leading characters. Bhat, p. 183, points out that only in late dramas the strict rule is disregarded and that the *vidūṣaka* here ranks with the servants, who address their master as *deva*. The uniqueness of *vayasya* as a form of address comes out best in the context of the whole passage [359]. It is

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[356] Cf., e.g., R. Pischel, Die Heimat des Puppenspiels (1900), p. 18 ("die Priester aller indischen Religionen mit Vorliebe verspottet"); A. Hillebrandt (1914), pp. 24 and 26: "eine Verspottung der höchsten Kaste", H. Güntert, Der arische Weltkönig und Heiland (Halle-Saale, 1923), p. 235: "Ist es doch bezeichnend, dass in den späteren indischen Dramen die komische Figur fast immer ein Priester sein muss, dessen Appetit meistens unvergleichlich viel mehr ausgebildet ist als sein Verstand", W. Ruben, Kālidāsa, The human meaning of his work (Berlin, 1957), p. 19, etc.
[357] Hertel (n. 344); but Winternitz, p. 172, n. 1, rightly objected that in no Old Indian description of court life a court-jester is mentioned and that the *vidūṣaka*, like the *viṭa*, rather belonged to Indian town-life (which point will be taken up below in § 19). It should be noted here that *rājya-vidūṣaka* "court-jester" in Sāgaranandin's Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa 2014 is a corrupt reading, see Raghavan's note in Translation, p. 66 (Bābūlāl Shukla reads accordingly *rājā vidūṣakam avadat*, p. 194, line 1 from the bottom). At the court of the Moghuls there seem to have been professional jesters, as Bīrbal was famous as the court-jester of Bābar in Delhi. In Old Tamil literature, however, the professional jester seems to have been as unknown as in Sanskrit literature. How the Telugu poet Tenāli Rāmakṛṣṇa, who lived under the kings Kṛṣṇadevarāya and Veṅkaṭapatirāya (first half of the 16th century A.D.) has become in *Tamil* tradition the court-jester of Kṛṣṇadevarāya I have been unable to find out (S. M. N. Sastri, *Tales of Tennalirama* was unfortunately not accessible to me). Dr. Kamil Zvelebil, to whom I owe the data on the Telugu poet, referred to A. S. Panchapakesa Aiyar, *Tenāli Rāma* (Madras, 1947). See p. 226.
[358] 19.10 (17.72 KM) *samāno 'tha vayasye 'ti.*
[359] 19.16 *deve 'ti nṛpatir vācyo bhṛtyaiḥ prakṛtibhis tathā, bhaṭṭe 'ti sārvabhaumas tu nityaṁ parijanena hi* (17) *rājann ity ṛṣibhir vācyo hy apatyapratyayena vā, vayasya rājann iti vā bhaved vācyo mahīpatiḥ* (18) *vidūṣakeṇa. rājñī ca ceṭī ca bhavatī 'ty api,*

also significant for the ancient character of this stage convention that later theorists, such as Sāgaranandin (between 1200 and 1250?), did not understand it any longer and misinterpreted the theory: "A companion is called *vayasyaka* (friend), and this term is used also for the jester"[360]. The Sāhityadarpaṇa gives also a different version[361]. See further Bhat, p. 106f.

Function in the drama. This leads us to consider the central problem: What exactly was the function of the *vidūṣaka* in the play?

Those who have studied his part, as it is known to us from the classical plays, without preconceived ideas about buffoons, have more than once stated that the *vidūṣaka* interferes with the plot, but often in a specific way. J. Huizinga, who wrote his doctor's thesis on the *vidūṣaka*, gave evidence of his perspicacity even in his early years, when he characterized the role of the *vidūṣaka* as follows:[362] "The *vidūṣaka* is a counter-stroke of the spirit of the play itself; the loftiness of the sentiments comes out the more strikingly by the contrast of his vulgarity". He points out that the *vidūṣaka*, while trying to help his friend, on the contrary gets him into trouble (p. 25): "His clumsiness manifests itself in his committing silly blunders in the very circumstances in which all depends on him — blunders with which he gets his friend into trouble, especially because he always lets his tongue run away with him". (See also pp. 23 and 128). In numerous situations he is scolded as *mūrkha* or *vaidheya* "fool"[363].

In connection with an observation by Huizinga on the Mālavikāgnimitra Gonda, p. 406f., remarks: "... aber ich frage mich, ob es nicht zum Charakter eines wahren Vidūṣakas gehört, dass er die Sachen stört und verdirbt, und auch, ob gerade die Tatsache, dass die Lösung des Knotens ohne sein Zutun zustande kommt, nicht vollkommen im Einklang ist mit der Aufgabe des Vidūṣakas in diesen Stücken, die u.a. darin bestand,

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nāmnā vayasye 'ty api vā rājñā vācyo vidūṣakaḥ (19) *sarvastrībhiḥ patir vācya āryaputre 'ti yauvane, anyadā punar ārye 'ti vācyo rājñyā 'pi bhūpatiḥ.*

[360] Sāgaranandin, Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa, translated by Myles Dillon-Murray Fowler-V. Raghavan (Philadelphia 1960), p. 44. The text (NLRK. 2199) reads *vayasyakaḥ sahacaraḥ sa eva ca vidūṣakaḥ.* Raṅganātha in his commentary (dated 1655 A.D.) on Vikramorvaśī II.0.1 and the edition by Bābūlāl Śukla (Varanasi 1972, śl. 270) have the variant reading *vayasyakaḥ cāṭupaṭuḥ sa eva ca vidūṣakaḥ; cāṭupaṭu* or *cāṭubaṭu* lexicographers gloss with *bhaṇḍaḥ* "jester". According to Sāgaranandin the *vidūṣaka* belonged to the court servants (see 2206=270), which must be due to a late attempt of theorists to fix his position (see § 16). This author does not mention him as a leading character together with the *nāyaka* and *nāyikā* in 2170ff.

[361] See SD. 6.145 *rājarṣibhir vayasye 'ti tathā vidūṣakeṇa ca, rājann ity ṛṣibhir vācyaḥ so 'patyapratyayena ca.*

[362] J. H. Huizinga (n. 344), p. 41: "De vidûṣaka is een terugslag van den geest van het stuk zelf; de verhevenheid van de sentimenten komt door het contrast van zijn platheid des te sterker uit", p. 25: "Zijn onhandigheid bestaat daarin, dat hij juist in de omstandigheden, waar het op hem aankomt, onnozele blunders maakt, waarmee hij zijn vriend in ongelegenheid brengt, vooral doordat hij nooit zijn mond weet te houden". Cf. also pp. 23 and 138.

[363] See Huizinga, p. 32, Indu Shekar (n. 344), p. 79.

dass er die von anderen in Gang gebrachten und geführten Vorgänge zwa, förderte, aber zugleich einen allzu glücklichen Ablauf ein wenig hemmte oder doch die grosse Freude des Helden über den schönen Verlauf der Ereignisse einigermassen verleidete. Diesen letztgenannten, schon oben erwähnten Charakterzug, die Neigung zum Stören von freudevollen und begeisterten Stimmungen durch nüchterne und kleinliche Bemerkungen, seine Tadelsucht, seine Plattheit der Erhabenheit des Helden oder der Situation gegenüber, finden wir auch wiederholt in anderen Stücken".

Bhat, p. 171, gives a similar characterization: "He, however, miscarries them [viz. the tasks of the hero], or makes a mess of them, and often creates complications for the hero". Elsewhere in his book, it is true, he proposes an unacceptable explanation for this behaviour but the facts referred to support Huizinga's description and deserve to be quoted here (p. 106): "The Vidūṣakas enjoy the confidence of the heroes, who turn to them with their secrets of love. And if Gautama blabbers the secret of the king in his sleep, as does Vasantaka in Priyadarśikā; if Māṇavaka loses the love-letter, as Maitreya allows the pot of ornaments to be stolen: these are blunders affected for humorous turn, or for story-development; and cannot be interpreted as a betrayal of the trust placed by the heroes in the Vidūṣakas".

It is not surprising, in view of such characterizations of the *vidūṣaka* as a leading part of the drama, that some connection has been sought between his generical name and his function in the plot of the play. Mostly, however, his name was taken to mean "scoffer, jeerer", which has long been associated with the ritual scoffer who is known from the Vedic ritual of the Mahāvrata. Those scholars, however, who have drawn attention to this ritual as a possible forerunner of the classical drama, have in general concentrated too one-sidedly on the abusive language used in the ritual talk between a brahmacārin and a courtezan [364].

More instructive is the ritual contrast between the "praiser" (*abhigara*) and the "reviler" (*apagara*). In this case the function of the reviler is clearly formulated in the words (PB. V.5.13) "He who finds fault with them, drives away their evil lot" [365] or (JB. III.356) "The *ninditṛ* takes

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[364] Thus Konow, p. 14, Keith, pp. 24f., 39. Gonda, p. 402f. criticizes this one-sided approach. On p. 359 he discusses the *abhigara*.

[365] The whole passage runs as follows: *abhigarāpagarau bhavato, nindaty enān anyaḥ, prā 'nyaḥ śaṁsati. ya enān nindati pāpmānam eṣāṁ so 'pahanti, yaḥ praśaṁsati yad evaiṣāṁ suṣṭutaṁ suśastaṁ tat so 'bhigṛṇāti.* See J. J. Meyer, Trilogie altindischer Mächte und Feste der Vegetation (Zürich-Leipzig 1937), III, p. 247, Gonda, AO. 19 (1943), p. 352, J. C. Heesterman, WZKSO. XII–XIII (1968), p. 177, Pierre Roland, "Le Mahāvrata" (Nachr. Akad. Wiss. Göttingen 1973-3), p. 67, and cf. TS. VII.5.9.3 *á 'nyáḥ krośati prá 'nyáḥ śaṁsati, yá ākrośati punáty evaí 'nānt sá, yáḥ praśáṁsati pūtéṣv evá 'nnádyaṁ dadhāti,* JB. II.405 *tayor ā 'nyaḥ krośati, prā 'ṇyaś śaṁsati. ya ākrośati punāty evainān saḥ, atha yaḥ praśaṁsati pūteṣv evaiteṣu sa indriyaṁ vīryaṁ dadhāti,* KS. XXXIV.5 (39,1) *abhigarāpagarau bhavataḥ, pra vā anyas sattriṇaś śaṁsati, nindaty anyo. yaḥ praśaṁsati yad evaiṣāṁ suṣṭutaṁ suśastaṁ tat sa praśamsaty, atha yo nindati yad evaiṣāṁ suṣṭutaṁ su(ś)śastaṁ* [r.: *duṣṣṭ. duśś.*] *tat so 'pahanti,* TB. I.2.6.7 (ĀpŚS. XXI.19.10–11) *imè 'rātsur imé subhūtám akrann*

upon him the impurity of (the one he reviles)". In this connection it is interesting to note that what is badly offered in the sacrifice is seized by Varuṇa[366]. These words express more than a mere association of Varuṇa and evil. They obviously imply that Varuṇa, like Nirṛti, is not only dreaded but also functions as a divine scapegoat who can take away evil and sin. This may also throw some light on a hidden aspect of the brahmin-*vidūṣaka* (see p. 222).

The importance of the Vedic "reviler" is primarily that it reveals in a general way in what context the role of the "criticizer" in the drama should be considered. It becomes more and more clear to what extent the figure of the *vidūṣaka* is rooted in Vedic religion. For a more direct study of the part of the *vidūṣaka* in the drama, however, we need not rely on speculations on possible Vedic prototypes or "forerunners", since the Nāṭyaśāstra contains more concrete data than any theory about the prehistory of the drama can give us. Here we have to consider once more the role of the *vidūṣaka* in the Trigata.

In the definition of the Nāṭyaśāstra he is described as the "spoiler" of the conversation of the assistant[367]. The assistant and the *vidūṣaka* are identical with the two assistants of the first part of the *pūrvaraṅga*,

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íty anyataró brūyāt. imá udvāsīkāríṇa imé durbhūtám akrann íty anyatarấḥ. yád evaíṣāṁ sukṛtáṁ yấ rấddhiḥ tád anyataró 'bhíśrīṇāti, yád evaíṣāṁ duṣkṛtáṁ yấ 'rấddhiḥ, tád anyataró 'pahanti (accentuation according to the Ānandāśrama ed.), Baudh. ŚS. XVI.22 (p. 268,7) *brāhmaṇaś ca śūdraś cā 'rdre carmakarte vyāyacchete. ime 'rātsur ime subhūtam akrann iti brāhmaṇa, ima udvāsīkāriṇa ime durbhūtam akrann iti vṛṣalo, brāhmaṇaḥ saṁjayati, naśyati vṛṣalaḥ*, Lāṭy. ŚS. IV.3.1 *brāhmaṇo 'bhigaraḥ pūrvasyāṁ sadaso dvāri pratyaṅmukha upaviśet* (2) *vṛṣalo 'pagaro 'parasyāṁ prāṅmukhaḥ* (3) *sa brūyān nā 'rātsur ime sattriṇa iti* (4) *arātsur ity abhigaraḥ . . .* (13) *sarveṣāṁ karmaṇi niṣṭhite tad evā 'bhigaras trir brūyāt* [commentary: *arātsur iti*] (14) *avasṛjya śūdraḥ pradravet*, Kāty. ŚS. XIII.3.6 *antarvedy abhigarāpagarau* (7) *ākrośaty ekaḥ, praśaṁsaty aparaḥ*. For the possible historical relations between the *abhigarāpagarau* and the opponents in the disputation of the later *vāda*-tradition, see p. 191 and J. C. Heesterman, WZKSO. 12–13 (1968), p. 177.

[366] According to JB. III.356 line 24 the *apagara* takes upon himself the impurity of the one whom he reviles (*śamalam asya ninditā pratimuñcate*). In this connection it may be suggested that the Sūtras which connect the reviling with the fight for the symbol of the sun (see the preceding note) may reflect a later conception of this ritual. It will be argued below (p. 222) that the *vidūṣaka* had to be a brahmin because as such he could take upon him the impurity of the sponsor of the dramatic performance. The same is true of the vendor of the Soma plant and of the *apagara*. I do not think, therefore, that the *śūdra* or *vṛṣala* of the fight for the hide was originally identical with the person of the *apagara*. The parallelism in this respect with Varuṇa as the divine scape-goat is clear. According to ŚB. IV.5.1.6 Mitra seizes what is well offered (*sviṣṭam*) of the sacrifice, and Varuṇa what is badly offered (*dúriṣṭam* see Ch. I n. 260). The same role of Varuṇa can, it seems, be seen in the formula which the priest mutters while accepting the *dakṣiṇā*, viz. *varuṇas tvā nayatu devi dakṣiṇe* (KS. IX.9, PB. I.8.2ff.) "Let Varuṇa lead thee, o divine Dakṣiṇā". Heesterman, IIJ. 3 (1959), p. 243, rightly stresses the danger inherent in accepting a *dakṣiṇā*: the priest, while accepting it, should turn away from it (*vyāvṛtya*) and assign the gifts to various gods. This is expressly done in the two passages referred to above, where each assignment is preceded by the formula quoted.

[367] See p. 191 and the foot-notes 293 and 320.

who have been interpreted as standing for Indra and Varuṇa. As we have seen above, the highest authority in this *vívāc*[368] declares the "assistant" victorious, which implies that he stands for Indra, who *has* to win the contest. The *vidūṣaka* must then be the impersonation of Varuṇa. There is, accordingly, a mythical identity of Indra = *jarjaradhara* = *pāripārśvika* on the one hand, and of Varuṇa = *bhṛṅgāradhāra* = *vidūṣaka* on the other. It has already been pointed out in passing that the relation between these two mythical "complexes" contains the basic pattern for that between the *nāyaka* and the *vidūṣaka* in the play (see p. 193). These two are the leading parts and the *nāyaka* is protected by Indra. That their relation was a curious one has long been noted by modern scholars. If we disregard the protector of the *vidūṣaka* for the reasons stated above (p. 176), the two groups of equations are Indra = *jarjaradhara* = *pāripārśvika* = *nāyaka* and Varuṇa = *bhṛṅgāradhāra* = *vidūṣaka*. In other words the relation between *pāripārśvika* and *vidūṣaka* in the Trigata is basically the same as that between *nāyaka* and *vidūṣaka* in the play. The structural approach thus throws a new light on the so-called "Freundestreue" of the *vidūṣaka* and shows that in the relation that must *originally* have existed between the hero and his "friend" there was in fact an element of contest.

The Vedic verbal contest between Indra and Varuṇa must have taken place at a time when Varuṇa was still the representative of the primordial world of the Asuras. Their *vívāc* was an aspect of the strife between the two cosmic powers, out of which the ordered world was to be born. The contest was in general considered a creative act, as is beautifully symbolized in the myth of the Churning of the Ocean. Held has pointed out that the creation of the cosmos is an act in which both Devas and Asuras participate. By taking turns in pulling the rope that is wound around the churn-staff they perform the two cosmic movements of *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti*, as a result of which the primordial waters (later called the Milk Ocean) produce the goods of life[369]. In Ch. I, we have already met with this combination of cooperation and contest between gods and Asuras, who need each other and yet must necessarily fight each other in order to promote the process of life[370]. The analysis of the Trigata leads to the conclusion that the same ambiguous relation must originally have existed between the *nāyaka* and the *vidūṣaka*. It is Huizinga's merit to have detected traces of this relation even in the behaviour of the *vidūṣaka* in the classical drama and to have divined that here the most essential and characteristic trait of his character has been preserved. He was a "tegenspeler", a fellow-player *and* "counter-actor".

It is inevitable, in view of the current opinions on Varuṇa and the *vidūṣaka*, that the idea that the latter is an impersonation of the former

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[368] See n. 321.

[369] See G. J. Held, The Mahabharata, pp. 171, 306.

[370] Cf., e.g., Dhanika ad DR. 3.64 *teṣāṁ ca phalāni pṛthak pṛthag bhavanti, yathā samudramanthane Vāsudevādīnāṁ Lakṣmyādilābhaḥ.*

must appear wildly grotesque and absurd. This is due, on the one hand, to a misinterpretation of the *vidūṣaka* as a mere buffoon and, on the other hand, to a confusion of a superhuman cosmic order (*Ṛtá*), of which Varuṇa was the guardian, with human ethics. In the Vedic conception one who unwittingly transgresses the cosmic order is punished for a sin which can only be understood metaphysically, not ethically. Varuṇa is a majestic god but in his own way, not as many great Vedists of the 19th and 20th centuries used to depict him, because he impersonates the ambiguity of cosmic life, in which death is comprised. Just as no *pravṛtti* can be conceived without its negative counterpart of *nivṛtti*, so the *nāyaka* can only be understood in relation to his counterpart, the *vidūṣaka*. The basic flaw in many studies on the *vidūṣaka* has been that he was considered separately, not in the interrelation which constitutes his real character. This also provides an answer to the fundamental question, which, however, seems never to have been asked: Why was it that this purportedly grotesque and comical character is stated in our oldest source to have been *the* leading part of the drama, on a par with the hero? This fact, which none of the existing theories can explain, becomes clear when it is realized that in the interplay of action and counteraction his relation to the *nāyaka* was that of Varuṇa to Indra. For basically the action of the oldest Sanskrit drama must have been a reiteration of the cosmogony and a ritual act aiming at a renewal of life.

It is instructive to compare the ambiguous character of the *vidūṣaka* with that of the "opponent" of the *nāyaka*, the "counter-*nāyaka*". From the handbooks on dramaturgy we know that in the Īhāmṛga a *pratināyaka* stood over against the *nāyaka*. According to the commentaries this term referred to the "hero of the opposite party" (*pratipakṣanāyaka*) in plays where, e.g., Rāma and Rāvaṇa, or Yudhiṣṭhira and Duryodhana were opposed to each other[371]. This theoretical distinction does not seem have been very important in practice.

17. DRAMAS WITHOUT A VIDŪṢAKA

From an analysis of chapters I and V of the Nāṭyaśāstra it has been inferred that in an older form of the Sanskrit drama the *nāyaka* and the *vidūṣaka* were the leading parts[372]. There is a more or less general agreement on the older parts of the Nāṭyaśāstra dating back to a time

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[371] See DR. 2.9 (*atha pratināyakaḥ*) *lubdho dhīroddhataḥ stabdhaḥ pāpakṛd vyasanī ripuḥ*, and Dhanika's commentary: *tasya nāyakasye 'tthaṁbhūtaḥ pratipakṣanāyako bhavati, yathā Rāmayudhiṣṭhirayo Rāvaṇaduryodhanau.* Cf. also the definition of the Īhāmṛga, DR. 3.73 *naradivyāv aniyamān nāyakapratināyakau, khyātau dhīroddhatāv antyo viparyāsād ayuktakṛt.* The idea that the *pratināyaka*'s wrong deeds are due to "error" (*viparyāsād*, Dhanika: *viparyayajñānād*) introduces a novel element. SD. 6.246 changes this into *anyo gūḍhabhāvād ayuktakṛt.*

[372] Thieme, who states that "das Nāṭyaśāstra einerseits von einer 'Rolle' des *vidūṣaka* im Schauspiel nichts sagt" must have overlooked such data as the term of address *vayasya* (see n. 359), which presupposes scenes in which the *vidūṣaka* and the king were both on the stage.

anterior to the oldest extant dramas, including the fragments of Aśvaghoṣa's [373]. In view of this fact and of the theory that the combined action of *vidūṣaka* and *nāyaka* reflects a certain structure of Vedic mythology one is led to assume that all old dramas must needs have had a *vidūṣaka*. The tradition which required that he should be one of the leading characters is, indeed, faithfully maintained in one of the oldest dramas, fragments of which have come down to us, viz. Aśvaghoṣa's Śāriputraprakaraṇa, which Lüders has in a masterly way reconstructed from the central Asian fragments. The *vidūṣaka* is here the friend and companion of a mendicant monk, and he speaks words which according to the Buddhist tradition have been spoken by Maudgalyāyana. His character is not without dignity but on the other hand his action results in checking and retarding the action of the *nāyaka* [374]. In Bhāsa's and Kālidāsa's dramas the *vidūṣaka* was "ein kluger Berater des Königs" [375].

From the dramatic literature that has been handed down to us, however, it has rightly been concluded that the *vidūṣaka* only occurs in the Prakaraṇa, a *genre* often characterized as "bürgerliches Drama". He does not occur in the *nāṭaka*, which takes its subject-matter from the epics. Since far-going theories have been founded on this fact, it may be well to repeat that, as far as we can see, the Sanskrit literary drama has always been a form of court art. This is as true of the Prakaraṇa as it is of the Nāṭaka. The difference between the two genres was according to the Nāṭyaśāstra (20.50–51) one of plot and characters. The theory that on account of these characteristics the Prakaraṇa must have originated in a hypothetical popular theatre is unfounded [376].

In the following discussion data of the theorists about other genres, such as the Ḍima, the Īhāmṛga, etc. will be left out of consideration as they have only theoretical importance.

The *vidūṣaka* does not occur in the following dramas:

a) the Samavakāra (see Abhinavagupta ad 1.97).
b) the Rāma- and Kṛṣṇa-dramas of Bhāsa.

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[373] See, e.g., Thieme, p. 35, Feistel, p. 137f.

[374] See H. Lüders, Philologica Indica, p. 208. To Lüders the introduction of the *vidūṣaka* in such a drama was absurd: "An und für sich ist natürlich die Idee, einem nur der Hoffnung auf Erlösung lebenden Bettelmönnich—denn das war Śāriputra schon, ehe er in den buddhistischen Orden trat—die lustige Person zum Gefährten zu geben, absurd. Wenn es doch geschieht, so beweist das, dass die Verbindung des Vidūṣaka mit dem Helden, er mag sein wer er will, zu Aśvaghoṣas Zeit schon ein so festes Gesetz der Bühne war, dass der Dichter sich ihm nicht entziehen konnte".

[375] See Konow, p. 62.

[376] For an ample and excellent discussion of the origin of the *prakaraṇa* see Thieme, p. 38, where it is derived from the mime, and, e.g., p. 81, where it is characterized as "die Gattung des auf die literarische Ebene gehobenen Volksstücks", which is older than Aśvaghoṣa. Konow, p. 43, sums up the arguments for the existence of a mime: "Es kann nach alledem nicht zweifelhaft sein, dass sie wirklich Mimen waren, obgleich wir uns von ihrer Kunst keine vollständige Vorstellung machen können" (cf. pp. 14, 15, 47).

c) the Mudrārākṣasa.
d) Bhavabhūti's dramas.
e) the shadow-plays (*chāyānāṭakas*) Mahānāṭaka and Dūtāṅgada.

Of these five categories the last three can be ignored for various reasons[377]. What remains is the Samavakāra and the epic dramas. The Samavakāra has been discussed above, where it was pointed out that here Indra and Varuṇa must have appeared without disguise. In its structure the Samavakāra with its twelve *nāyakas* was nearer to the Ḍima with sixteen *nāyakas*[378].

The Nāṭaka was the typically heroic drama. Kālidāsa has been the first to introduce a *vidūṣaka* in this *genre*, who had up to that time been excluded from it. The subject-matter of these plays is characterized as mythical, in contrast with the Prakaraṇa. To a certain extent this is correct but it may give rise to false impressions and misunderstandings. There is a wide gap between the Vedic myth and the epics. Even though the war between the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas, as told in the Mahābhārata, is a replica of the fight between Devas and Asuras[379], Yudhiṣṭhira and Duryodhana[380] are not, from a mythological point of view, of prime interest. The arguments brought forward in favour of the theory that Arjuna stands for Indra, and Dhṛtarāṣṭra for Varuṇa, seem to me convincing[381]. Besides, the so-called epic dramas do not seem to date back to a remote past. In any case, those of "Bhāsa's dramas" which are based on the Mahābhārata, viz. Madhyamavyāyoga, Dūtaghaṭotkaca, Pañcarātra, Ūrubhaṇga, Karṇabhāra and Dūtavākya deal in fact with legendary tales, not with the old mythology, traces of which are even in the epic hardly perceptible. Hence the absence of the *vidūṣaka* is not surprising[382].

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[377] Viśākhadatta's Mudrārākṣasa is in more than one respect quite unique in dramatic literature: although its author introduces it as a *nāṭaka*, it has some characteristics of a *prakaraṇa* and its plot can be said to be based on two *nāyakas* (not a *pratināyaka* and a *nāyaka*!) without a *nāyikā*. The severe *vīrarasa* prevented the introduction of a *vidūṣaka*, which is not striking in the most uncommon of classical dramas. In the case of Bhavabhūti there was apparently "eine persönliche Abneigung" against the *vidūṣaka* (Lüders, Philologica Indica, p. 428). The shadow-plays Mahānāṭaka (11th cent.) and Dūtāṅgada (13th cent.) are too late to prove anything in this connection.

[378] See for the first 20.65, DR. 3.64, SD. 6.235, and for the second 20.88, DR. 3.58, SD. 6.243.

[379] See the references in Numen 8 (1961), p. 40.

[380] Quoted by Dhanika, see n. 371.

[381] For Arjuna see W. Caland, "De incarnaties van den god Wishṇu", Mededeelingen van het Provinciaalsch Genootschap voor Letterkunde (Utrecht 1927), p. 27. Cf. Mhbh. V.58.11, where Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa are called *indraviṣṇusamau*. In a more general sense, however, all five Pāṇḍavas are impersonations of Indra, cf. I.189.33 (: 32, 28 etc.), III.254.21 *Pārthāḥ pañca pañcendrakalpāḥ*, IV.19.18 *yūyam indrasamāḥ sadā*, V.24.8 *Pāṇḍoḥ sutāḥ sarva eve 'ndrakalpāḥ*, V.33.103 *Pāṇḍoḥ putrāḥ pañca pañcendrakalpāḥ*. For the equation of Varuṇa and Dhṛtarāṣṭra see Gösta Johnsen, IIJ. 9 (1966), pp. 245–265.

[382] For some of these dramas it is moreover doubtful whether they are *nāṭakas* or *vyāyogas*. See Konow, p. 52f., M. M. Ghosh, Translation I², p. 367 n. 2, Thieme, p. 74.

The same is true of "Bhāsa plays" based on the Rāma and Kṛṣṇa legends. In the Pratimānāṭaka, and Abhiṣekanāṭaka, which belong to the Rāmaic tradition, and in the Bālacarita, taken from the Kṛṣṇa-tradition there is nothing to suggest that we have an old type of dramas before us. It is even possible that in these dramas the development of the Nāṭaka from the recitation of the epic (according to Lüders's theory)[383] can still be seen. Renou stressed the fact that the classical drama is principally based on Rāma worship[384]. In dramas based upon Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa, however, there was very little room for a *vidūṣaka*. His absence, far from proving anything about the origin and prehistory of the Sanskrit drama[385], would rather seem an indication of the comparatively late rise of the Nāṭaka as a genre.

On the other hand, the circumstance that traditionally the *vidūṣaka* belonged to the Prakaraṇa and the *kathā*-dramas leads to the unexpected conclusion that as a *genre* the Prakaraṇa was probably older[386] than the Nāṭaka. This leaves several questions open, which cannot be answered for lack of evidence.

18. VIDŪṢAKA AND JUMBAKA

Since the Nāṭyaśāstra only seldom refers to the comic effect of the costume and make-up of the *vidūṣaka* (see p. 202), it is remarkable that there existed a detailed and fixed tradition about the corporeal particularities which characterize the *vidūṣaka*[387]. References to this tradition are to be found in various parts of the Nāṭyaśāstra, which leads

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[383] Lüders, Philologica Indica, p. 427: "Dadurch, dass man das Wort dem Rezitator nahm und den bis dahin nur durch die Geste wirkenden Figuren selbst in den Mund legte, ist das Nāṭaka im engeren Sinn entstanden".

[384] See Renou, La recherche sur le théâtre indien depuis 1890, p. 39. He, however, also leaves the possibility of a Kṛṣṇaite origin open (pp. 30 n. 2, 39).

[385] Cf. Lüders, Philologica Indica, p. 428: "Glücklicherweise sind wir jetzt in der Lage, mit Bestimmtheit behaupten zu können, dass das episch-mythologische Drama in vorklassischer Zeit den Vidūṣaka noch nicht aufgenommen hatte".

[386] For the theory of its originating in the popular mime see above, n. 376.

[387] G. K. Bhat, The Vidūṣaka (Ahmedabad 1959), pp. 48–52 gives a survey of the particulars of the appearance of the *vidūṣaka* as described in the Nāṭyaśāstra and found in the classical dramas: "Later theorists do not mention anything about the appearance of the Vidūṣaka except Śāradātanaya who repeats Bharata's adjectives, that the Vidūṣaka is bald-headed, red-eyed, possessed of a funny sort of back-bone (that is, 'hunch-back') and adds that his hair is tawny and he has a beard that is either yellow or green in colour". This passage in the Bhāvaprakāśana (p. 289, lines 5–7, dating from between 1175 and 1250 A.D.) runs as follows: *vedavin narmavedī yo netuḥ sa syād vidūṣakaḥ, khalatiḥ piṅgalākṣaś ca hāsyānūkavibhūṣitaḥ, piṅgakeśo hariśmaśrur nartakaś ca vidūṣakaḥ*. It should be added that Dhanika in explanation of DR. 2.9 *hāsyakṛc ca vidūṣakaḥ* remarks *asya ca vikṛtākāraveṣāditvaṁ hāsyakāritvenai 'va labhyate*. SD. 3.42 mentions his appearance in a very general way: "causing laughter by his actions, his figure, his make-up and his speeches" (*karmavapurveṣabhāṣādyair hāsyakaraḥ*). The term *vikṛtākāra* used by Dhanika occurs in NŚ. 31.17 with reference to the servants (*dāsabhūmi*).

to the conclusion that it must have been part of an old collection of prescriptions which have been compiled in Bharata's Handbook.

As we have seen above (p. 204), these descriptions have generally been interpreted as primitive means to achieve a comic effect, although the Nāṭyaśāstra only twice refers to this effect. Seldom has due consideration been given to the practical consequences of the fact that the Handbook distinguishes between three kinds of comic effects, viz. those due to corporeal defects, to words and to the costume and make-up of the *vidūṣaka* (p. 205). The first of these three categories, however, requires an entirely deformed person for the part of the *vidūṣaka*. There can be no doubt that in the classical drama this aspect has been ignored, but if so, the basic question that calls for an answer is: Why does the Handbook consistently stress such strict requirements which are only understandable in the case of servants (p. 221)?

Since the Nāṭyaśāstra constantly deals with this practice, and goes into the most minute details of how movements, feelings, etc. should be represented on the stage, it is inconceivable that it should have given such impracticable prescriptions *unless there were absolutely compelling reasons to lay down these strict rules, in the face of the obvious impossibility of fulfilling them in practice.* It is the object of this section to inquire into these reasons. To this end it will be necessary to quote the exact wording of the Sanskrit passages.

The first passage occurs in chapter XIII, which deals with the various gaits. Immediately after a passage which describes how the gait of lame men, cripples and dwarfs is to be represented the text has the following verses:

vidūṣakasyā'pi gatir hāsyatrayasamanvitā
(138) *aṅgavākyakṛtaṁ hāsyaṁ hāsyaṁ nepathyajaṁ tathā*
danturaḥ khalatiḥ kubjaḥ khañjaś ca vikṛtānanaḥ
(139) *ya īdṛśaḥ praveśaḥ syād aṅgahāsyaṁ tu tad bhavet*
yadā tu khagavad gacched ullokitavilokitaiḥ
(140) *atyāyatapadatvāc ca aṅgahāsyo bhavet sa tu*
vākyahāsyaṁ tu vijñeyam asaṁbaddhaprabhāṣaṇāt[388].

"Also the gait of the vidūṣaka has three comical properties. It is comical because of his corporeal defects (and movements), his talk and because of his costume and make-up. He has protruding teeth, is bald-headed, hunch-backed and lame and has a distorted face. When he makes his entrance in such a way, the laughter is due to his "limbs". When,

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[388] 13.137–139 C., 12.137–138 B., 12.121–122 KM[1] (omitted in KM[2], see above, p. 204. Variant readings: *yadīdṛśaḥ* KM[1] for *ya īdṛśaḥ*; *smṛtam* and *-aṅgakāvyakṛtam* for *tathā* and *aṅgavākyakṛtam* C. Cf. also 12.142 B (125 KM[1]) *kāvyahāsyam* for 13.140 C. *vākyahāsyam*, which must be the correct reading: "*vākya* is the text or song" (Raghavan, note on NLRK., p. 65), whereas *kāvya* is "drama, play", cf. 27.24, 42, 43, 44. Cf. 27.58 *yad yasya śilpaṁ nepathyaṁ karma vāk ceṣṭitaṁ tathā, tasya tenaiva tat sādhyaṁ svakarmaviṣayāśrayam*, 13.191 *strī pumāṁsaṁ tv abhinayed veṣavākyaviceṣṭitaiḥ* and Śiṅgabhūpāla *vikṛtāṅgavacoveṣair hāsyakārī* (see p. 203).

however, he walks like a bird, looking up and down, he is (also), owing to his taking excessively wide strides, laughable due to his limbs. Laughter due to words is the effect of incoherent talk . . ." etc.

The last words are reminiscent of the *asaṁbaddhakathāprāyāṁ . . . kathanikām* (5.138) of the *vidūṣaka* in the Trigata (p. 178 n. 294).

In a brief characterization of the various parts of the *sūtradhāra, pāripārśvika, viṭa* and *śakāra*, the *vidūṣaka* is described in a similar way:

vāmano danturaḥ kubjo dvijihvo vikṛtānanaḥ
khalatiḥ piṅgalākṣaś ca sa vidheyo vidūṣakaḥ [389]

"The *vidūṣaka* must be represented as a dwarf with protruding teeth, hunch-backed, double-tongued, with a distorted face, bald-headed and yellow-eyed".

In Suśruta the double-tonguedness is a disease. It may be conjectured that here it refers to a stuttering speech, similarly to Dutch *zijn tong slaat dubbel* "he speaks thickly, in a thick voice", but this must remain a guess. See above, p. 193.

Two further passages must be mentioned. The first runs as follows:

vidūṣakasya khalatiḥ syāt kākapadam eva ca [390]

"The *vidūṣaka* is bald-headed and has lines in the skin (? of his face?)"

and the second:

pratyutpannapratibho narmakṛtair narmagarbhanirbhedaiḥ
chedavibhūṣitavadano vidūṣako nāma vijñeyaḥ [391]

"A *vidūṣaka* is ready-witted by disclosures made as a pleasantry (*narma* 22.50) or a covert pleasantry (*narmagarbha* 22.53) and has stripes of colour (?) put on the face".

The last verse is for several reasons of dubious value. It appears as a second definition (35.92–93) after the traditional definition, which is given a few lines before (35.79), it has further been handed down in many variant readings and, finally, the meaning of *cheda-* (a variant reading of KM), which has here been translated in accordance with Bhat (The Vidūṣaka, pp. 49, 102 n. 16), is quite uncertain.

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[389] 35.79 C^1. Similarly 24.103 KM^2 (*dvijanmā*) and ibid., p. 655, interpolation after 35.20 (*dvijihvo*), 35.57 K. (v. l. *dvijihvo* according to Bhat, The Vidūṣaka, p. 48 n. 1).

[390] 23.151. Similarly 22.126 KM^1 (*khalitiḥ*), whereas 21.155 B., 21.148 KM^2, 23.148 K. read *vidūṣakasya kartavyaṁ khallikākapadaṁ* (*khallī kākapadaṁ*) *tathā*. Cf. Abhinavagupta *kākapadam : kākapakṣavad yatra keśavicchedaḥ* and see Bhat, p. 49.

[391] 35.93 C^1. While 35.25 KM (both editions) reads *narmakṛtā*, C. has *narmakṛtair, -nirbhedai(ś ca)*, (B. *narmakṛto -nirbhedaḥ*) and *cheko vidūṣitavacano*, which might be connected with (*saṁjalpa*) *vidūṣakavidūṣitaḥ* in 5.140 (138 KM^2), see the foot-notes 293 and 320. The Kāśī edition (35.71 K) has *nirbhedyaḥ yas tu vibhūṣitavacano . . .*, see Bhat, p. 102 n. 16. His assumption of a word *narmakṛt* with the same meaning as *narmakṛti* is unacceptable.

The same variant reading also occurs in 27.8

vidūṣakocchekakṛtaṁ bhavec chilpakṛtaṁ ca yat
atihāsyena tad grāhyaṁ prekṣakair nityam eva hi

Ghosh's translation "Laughter created by the bragging of the Jester and by some artifice (śilpa) should be received by the spectators with an Excessive Laughter (atihāsya)" is based upon his conjecture *utseka* "haughtiness, pride". Although the v.l. *uccheda* (27.8 KM^{1,2}, 27.8 B^{1}, which reads *tu* for *hi*, 27.20 K [?]), seems to occur in some MSS., it cannot be correct, since *uccheda* means "cutting off". Abhinavagupta reads *cheda*, which according to him means "irony, wit, repartee" (*vidūṣakacchedakṛtam iti cchedo 'tra vacanabhaṅgī*, B. III^{1}, p. 310 line 5). This interpretation is not, as far as I can see, supported by any other evidence. If it is correct, it would be possible to conjecture for 35.25 KM. *chedavibhūṣitavadano vidūṣako nāma vijñeyaḥ* the emendation *chedavidūṣitavacano* "who criticizes the other's words by his witty interruptions" (see n. 391). This would come near to Ghosh's reading (conjecture?) *cheko vidūṣitavacano vidūṣako* etc. (35.93) but the first word is probably not correct, since *cheda* vs. *śilpa* seems a contrast like *veṣa-vākya*, *vaco-veṣa* (see n. 388).

As we have seen above (p. 202), there must have been a wide gap between theory and practice. In the classical dramas there are no indications to show that the stage-managers cared much for these rules of the Handbook [392]. In practice the prescriptions about the *aṅgakṛtaṁ hāsyam*, in so far as they referred to deformity, seem to have remained a dead letter, and the actor apparently confined himself to choosing a costume and make-up that were appropriate to his part. Along with the traditional theory also this practice has found expression in our text: the *locus classicus* for the outward appearance of the *vidūṣaka* in ch. XIII, the beginning of which has been quoted above, then goes on to describe the *nepathyajaṁ hāsyam* in the following words: "One who is dressed in a tattered cloth or in a skin, or smeared with soot, ashes or red chalk, such a man, O brahmins, will cause laughter owing to his costume and make-up" [393]. The text states expressly that it is left to the actor, after carefully considering the character (*prakṛti*) he has to represent, to adapt his *bhāva* ("state", in Ghosh's translation) to it. Nowhere else is the gap between tradition and reality so manifest as here. The author begins with two different definitions of the comic effect achieved by the "limbs". The first is obviously an old mnemotechnical verse, which is quoted with some variation in several places of the Handbook but has, in fact, hardly any bearing upon the gait. It is purely theoretical and impracticable and, therefore, complemented by a second definition, which can, indeed, be

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[392] Cf., e.g., Bhat, The Vidūṣaka, p. 50: "The Sanskrit dramatists tacitly assume the peculiar appearance of the Vidūṣaka and do not bother to mention it in their texts. And when they do so, they refer not always to the attributes given by the theorists, but to the general appearance of the Vidūṣaka only".

[393] 13.141 (12.141 B., 140 K., Grosset) *cīracarmamaṣībhasmagairikādyais tu maṇḍitaḥ, yas tādṛśo bhaved viprā hāsyo nepathyajas tu saḥ*. Bhat, p. 50, points to this passage.

realized by gait, but only incidentally. In reality the *vidūṣaka* must have achieved the comic effect that was expected from him mainly by means of his talk (which was part of the *vākya*, the literary text) and his make-up.

A further argument for the purely theoretical nature of the traditional prescriptions is that none of the later theorists mention them except Śāradātanaya (c. 1175–1250 A.D.)[394].

In view of some modern studies in which the appearance of the *vidūṣaka* has been connected with deformity[395] it may be noted that the Nāṭyaśāstra never classes him with deformed people. It distinguishes the gait of cripples and dwarfs (13.131–136) from that of the *vidūṣaka* (13.137–140) and in the description of the accompaniment of the orchestra (*vādyavidhāna*)[396] it makes a distinction between the way in which the walking movements of the lames, the cripples, dwarfs, hunch-backs, etc. are accompanied[397], or the walking of yatis, munis, Pāśupatas and Buddhists[398], and the accompaniment of the walking of "the *vidūṣakas*, the *nirmuṇḍas*, servants and eunuchs"[399], accordingly a group of court-servants. As far as his corporeal characteristics are concerned, the *vidūṣaka* has, indeed, more in common with the servants[400] than with the cripples.

There is, however, another figure with whom the *vidūṣaka* has particularly striking features in common and who shows that the curious description of the *vidūṣaka*, inexplicable in a handbook for dramatic performances, is also rooted in an old Vedic tradition. It is the Vedic *jumbaká*[401], on whose head, at the end of the horse sacrifice and in conclusion of the purificatory bath, an offering is made. The similarities between the

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[394] Cf. Bhāvaprakāśana (GOS. No 45, p. 289), quoted in n. 387.

[395] E.g., Gonda, Acta Or. 19 (1943), pp. 410–416.

[396] 33.232+C. (p. 176 line 14). Very corrupt in KM², p. 642 line 3. [Cf. 34, p. 486,23B].

[397] *khañjavikalavāmanakubjādīnāṁ pravṛttagamaneṣu.*

[398] *yatimunipāśupataśākyādīnāṁ liṅgināṁ ca.*

[399] *vidūṣakanirmuṇḍopasthāyakavarṣadharādīnām.* For *nirmuṇḍa* cf. 34.77 *aupasthāyika-nirmuṇḍān strīṇāṁ preṣaṇakarmaṇi, rakṣaṇe kumārīṇāṁ ca bālikānāṁ ca yojayet* (the second line is omitted in 24.52 KM.) "And the Aupasthāyika-nirmuṇḍas are to be employed in escorting women, and in guarding maidens and girls" (Ghosh). They live in the harem, just as the *snātakas*, *kañcukīyas* and *varṣadharas* (34.72) "have no sexual knowledge" and are hermaphrodites: 34.80–81 *napuṁsakā ye puruṣāḥ strībhāvena varjitāḥ, nirmuṇḍā nāmato jñeyāḥ kāmavijñānavarjitāḥ.* The definition "one who is completely impotent and idle" (K. H. Trivedi, The Nāṭyadarpaṇa of Ramacandra and Guṇacandra, Ahmedabad 1966, p. 188) seems only approximately correct.

[400] See above n. 387 and cf. 35.16 *mantharaṁ vāmanaṁ kubjaṁ vikṛtaṁ vikṛtānanam, viṣṭabdhanetraṁ kāṇākṣaṁ sthūlaṁ cipiṭanāsikam* (17) *durveṣaṁ duḥsvabhāvaṁ ca vikṛtākāram eva ca, dāsabhūmau prayuñjīta budho dāsāṁ[k]asaṁyutam.* The reading *dāsāṅka-* C. ex conjectura: KM. has *dāsāṅga-* and further *niṣṭabdhanetraṁ, durjanaṁ* (for *durveṣaṁ*), whereas K (according to C and KM.) reads *visṛṣṭanetrakāryāṇāṁ sthūlaṁ vihanunāsikam, durveṣi* etc. It is not surprising that Huizinga (n. 344), p. 62, who had only the corrupt first edition of the Kāvyamālā Series at his disposal, thought that these lines referred to the *vidūṣaka* and that one or more lines had been lost.

[401] A variant form *Jumbuka, Cumbuka* is only found in Hiraṇyakeśin.

descriptions of the *vidūṣaka* and the *jumbaká* are the more interesting because the latter impersonates Varuṇa [402].

In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa the relevant episode of the purificatory bath (*avabhṛthá*) is described in the following words: [403] "With 'to Jumbaka hail!' he offers, at the purificatory bath, the last oblation; for Jumbaka is Varuṇa: by a sacrifice he thus manifestly redeems himself from Varuṇa. He offers it on the head of a white-spotted [404], bald-headed (man) with protruding teeth [405] and reddish brown eyes [406]; for that is Varuṇa's form: by (that) form (of his) he thus redeems himself from Varuṇa" (translation by Eggeling).

Kātyāyana in his Śrautasūtra adds that the *jumbaká* is standing in the water, and Baudhāyana, that he must dive naked into the water. Most detailed is Śāṅkhāyana's description, according to which the *jumbaká* is taken to a river, where people make him descend into the water and make an offering on his head at the moment the water has reached his mouth. Some authorities add that he must be a brahmin of the gotra of the Ātreyas (Baudhāyana, Hiraṇyakeśin, Śāṅkhāyana), who according to Śāṅkhāyana must have been bought for a thousand (pieces of gold) [407].

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[402] See for the *Jumbaka* especially K. F. Johansson, Über die altindische Göttin Dhiṣáṇā und Verwandtes, Beiträge zum Fruchtbarheitskultus in Indien (Skrifter utgifna af K. Humanistiska Vetenskaps-Samfundet i Uppsala 20: 1), Uppsala 1917, p. 126f., Lüders, Acta Orientalia 16 (1938), pp. 142–145. Cf. also Geldner, Vedische Studien 2, p. 292 n. 2, Eggeling, SBE. 44, pp. XXII, XXXIXf., Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 27 n. 3.

[403] ŚB. XIII.3.6.5 *jumbakáya svāhé 'ty avabhṛthá uttamám āhutiṁ juhoti, Váruṇo vaí jumbakáḥ. sākṣād evá Váruṇam áva yajate. śuklásya khalatér viklidhásya piṅgākṣásya mūrdháni juhoty, etád vaí Váruṇasya rūpáṁ. rūpéṇai 'vá Váruṇam áva yajate.*

[404] *śuklá* "hellfarbig" (Lüders, Acta Or. 16, p. 134). The word seems to refer to a fair complexion, cf. TB. III.4.1.17 (Puruṣamedha) *sūryāya haryakṣám . . . ahné śuklám piṅgalám* (comm. *śuklavarṇadeham*) as opposed to *rātriyai kṛṣṇám piṅgākṣám*, Kāty. ŚS. XX.8.17 *śuklo 'tigauraḥ*, KB. 25.10-25.9.15 *śukra etasyā 'hnaḥ piṅgākṣo hotā syād iti haika āhuḥ* "The Hotṛ for this day should be white, with red eyes" (Keith).

[405] *viklidha* is explained as *dantura* by Harisvāmin in his commentary on ŚB., in the commentary on Kātyāyana and by Mahīdhara in his commentary on VS. XXV.9. See Lüders, op. c., pp. 142–145.

[406] *piṅgākṣa* "with yellow eyes", Lüders, op. c., pp. 132–134, contrasting with *piṅgalá* (see n. 317).

[407] The relevant passages are Kāty. ŚS. XX.8.17 *avabhṛtheṣṭyante 'psu magnasya piṅgalakhalativiklidhaśuklasya mūrdhani juhoti jumbakāya svāheti*, on which Mahīdhara has the following comment (ad VS. XXV.9): *avabhṛthayāgānte, evaṁvidhasya puṁso mūrdhani jumbakāye 'ti mantreṇā 'jyaṁ sakṛd gṛhītaṁ juhuyāt, kīdṛśasya puṁsaḥ? jale magnasya piṅgalākṣasya khalateḥ (khalvāṭasya) viklidhasya (danturasya) śuklasyā ('tigaurasye) 'ti sūtrārthaḥ. varuṇadevatyā dvipadā, yajur gāyatrī, Udanyaputramuṇḍibhadṛṣṭā*, whereas Uvaṭa gives some interesting details: *avabhṛthe, apsu magnasya piṅgalakhalativiklidhaśuklasya mūrdhani juhoti "jumbakāya svāhā" iti. vāruṇī dvipadā Śuṇḍibha-audanyadṛṣṭā. "Varuṇo vai jumbakaḥ" iti śrutiḥ, eṣā cāntar jale japtā pāpanāśinī. tad uktaṁ Hārītena: "jumbukā nāma gāyatrī vede vājasaneyake, antar jale sakṛj japtā brahmahatyāṁ vyapohati" iti*, (which is based on TB. III.9.15.3 *etáṁ ha vaí Muṇḍibhá Audanyaváḥ/bhrūṇahatyāyai práyaścittiṁ vidáṁ cakāra/yó hā 'syā 'pi prajāyāṁ brāhmaṇáṁ hánti/sárvasmai tásmai bheṣajáṁ*

The commentator on the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa states that this sacrifice makes Varuṇa *pāparūpa* disappear[408]. Somewhat apart from the stereotyped descriptions stands TĀ. I.2.3, where he is described in the words:

paṭáro víklidhaḥ piṅgáḥ | etád varuṇálakṣaṇam |
yátraitád upadṕśyate | sahásraṁ tátra nī́yate[409].

In view of the many details that have since become known it can no longer be reasonably doubted that Albrecht Weber was right in explaining this ritual as a last trace of human sacrifice[410]. By drowning a brahmin as the impersonation of the god the latter was induced to return to his

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karoti, iti), TB. III.9.15.3 *Váruṇo vai jumbakáḥ. antatá evá Váruṇam ávayajate, iti. khalatér viklidhásya śuklásya piṅgākṣásya mūrdháñ juhoti. etád vai Váruṇasya rūpám, rūpéṇaivá Váruṇam ávayajate*, which the commentator explains as follows: *etat khalatyādiyuktaṁ śarīraṁ Varuṇasya vārakasya pāpasya rūpam, atas taducitenaiva rūpeṇa Varuṇaṁ pāparūpam avayajate, vināśayati*, BaudhŚS. XV.37 *athaiṣa Ātreyo vihṛtaḥ śuklo viklidhas tilakavān piṅgākṣaḥ khalatir vikaṭaḥ kunakhī kubjaḥ śipiviṣṭo nagna upamajjati. tasya mūrdhni juhoti "jumbakāya svāhe" 'ty, atrā 'smā etac chataṁ vipathaṁ dadāty, athainam iṣujitāt pradhamanti* (? reading uncertain) *"mā me rāṣṭre vātsīr" iti*, ŚāṅkhŚS. XVI.18.18 *athā 'treyaṁ sahasreṇā 'vakrīya yaḥ śuklaḥ piṅgākṣo valinas* ("shrivelled, wrinkled") *tilakāvalo viklidhaḥ khaṇḍo baṇḍaḥ khalatis, tam ādāya nadīṁ yanti. athai 'nam udake 'bhipragāhya yadā 'syo 'dakaṁ mukham āsyandetā 'thā 'smā adhvaryur mūrdhany aśvatedaniṁ juhoti "bhrūṇahatyāyai svāhe" 'ti*, ĀpŚS. XX.22.6 (based upon TB. and ŚāṅkhŚS.) *avabhṛthena pracaryā 'treyaṁ śipiviṣṭaṁ khalatiṁ viklidhaṁ śuklaṁ piṅgākṣaṁ tilakāvalam avabhṛtham abhyavanīya tasya mūrdhañ juhoti "mṛtyave svāhā, bhrūṇahatyāyai svāhā, jumbakāya svāhe" 'ti tisraḥ*, HirŚS. XIV.4 *Ātreyaṁ khalatiṁ viklidhaṁ śuklaṁ piṅgākṣaṁ śipiviṣṭaṁ tilakāvalam avabhṛtham avanīya . . . tasya mūrdhañ juhoti*, Vādhūlasūtra (Acta Or. 4, p. 203) *tasmā anoyuktaṁ ca śataṁ ca dattvā 'ha: kṣattar, etad etasmā upakuru, athai 'naṁ nirvaha, mā me vijite vātsīr iti.*

[408] Caland's conclusion in his note on Āp. XX.22.6 ("Die meisten [viz. Epitheta] beziehen sich offenbar auf das lichte Wesen des Varuṇa") was rightly rejected by Lüders, op. c. p. 143 n. 4.

[409] Quoted with the accentuation of the edition of the Ānandāśrama Series 36 pt I[3] (1967), p. 9 (except *yátraitád*). The explanation which the commentary suggests for *paṭára* is plainly mere guess-work and devoid of sense. Lüders, p. 143 n. 2, rightly pointed to *vaṭara*, which the Kāśikā adds to the gaṇa *kaḍārādi* and for which Lüders proposes to read *vaṭhara*. It may be doubted, however, whether in such a native word for a defect a text emendation is required. The meaning may have been the same as of *baṇḍa* "maimed, defective, crippled" in Śāṅkhāyana. See also Turner, Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan Languages 9124 and 11236.

[410] See A. Weber, ZDMG. 18, p. 268 (=Indische Streifen I, p. 63), Hillebrandt, Altindien, p. 93f. (quoted by K. F. Johansson, Über die altindische Göttin Dhiṣáṇā (see n. 402), p. 131f.), Vedische Mythologie II[2], p. 27 n. 3, K. F. Johansson, op. c., pp. 125–132, A. K. Coomaraswamy, Yakṣas II (1931), p. 28, and further S. Lévi, Doctrine du sacrifice, p. 132f., Keith ad TS. VI.1.11.6 *puruṣaniṣkráyaṇa iva hi* (p. 500 n. 3), J. C. Heesterman, "The case of the severed head", WZKSO. 11 (1967), pp. 22–43, D. Schlingloff, IIJ. 11 (1968), p. 175 with references for the *puruṣamedha*. On Keith's interpretation of the Jumbaka as "a mystical view of the nature of Varuṇa" (Religion and Philosophy of the Veda, p. 96, on the basis of ŚB. XIII.3.6.5) see Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II[2], p. 28 n. 3. Keith, p. 304, only accepted the scapegoat character of the Jumbaka. For the scapegoat in general see also Hertha Krick, WZKS. 16 (1972), p. 31 n. 27.

own element, the water. In this connection the words *yadā 'syo 'dakaṁ mukham āsyandeta* "when the water reaches his mouth" are particularly significant. Equally eloquent is the prescription, handed down by Baudhāyana and Śāṅkhāyana, that at the end of the ritual the Ātreya must be banished. After the ritual drowning of the victim (who had been bought for this purpose) had become only a symbolical act, other means were needed to get rid of the scapegoat, who was burdened with evil (Varuṇa *pāparūpa*!).

An exact comparison of the terms which occur in the various descriptions of the *vidūṣaka* with those of the *jumbaká* shows that four features of the former have direct correspondences with the latter:

dantura "with protruding teeth" NŚ.	: *viklidhá* ŚB. TB. TĀ. Hir. Āp. Śāṅkh. Baudh.
khalati "bald-headed" NŚ.	: *khalatí* ŚB. TB. Hir. Āp. Śāṅkh. Baudh.
kubja "hunch-backed" NŚ.	: *kubja* Baudh.
piṅgalākṣa "red-eyed" NŚ.	: *piṅgākṣá* ŚB. TB. Hir. Āp. Śāṅkh. Baudh. *piṅgala* Kāty., *piṅgá* TĀ.

Four other features can be paralleled with similar characteristics, although the correspondence is at best partial:

vikṛtānana "with a distorted face" NŚ.	: *vikaṭa* Baudh.
khañja "limping" NŚ.	: *khaṇḍa* "crippled, defective" Śāṅkh.
vāmana "dwarfish" NŚ.	: *baṇḍa* "maimed, defective, crippled" Śāṅkh., cf. *paṭára* TĀ.
chedavibhūṣitavadana (? p. 216) NŚ.	: *tilakāvala* Śāṅkh. Hir. Āp., *tilakavant* "furnished with marks" Baudh.

The precise meaning of *khaṇḍa* and *baṇḍa/vaṇḍa* is, it is true, doubtful: the first means "mutilated" but *bhagnadanta* according to the commentary ad ĀpŚS. VII.12.1, the latter also "mutilated" (*yo na vivardhate*) but *bhinnapuccha* "tailless" according to the Nighaṇṭu and some commentators, "impotent" (*nirvīrya*) according to Sāyana ad AthS. VII.67(65).3. Both characteristics were, in any case, inauspicious and therefore not allowed in the case of sacrificial animals (such as the he-goat, ĀpŚS. VII.12.1, cf. MS. IV.3.8: 47,15) or of the Soma-cow. On the other hand, the latter *had* to be *piṅgākṣá* "red-eyed", because this was the appearance (*rūpá*) of Soma (TS. VI.1.6.7).

Apart from two old words whose meaning is unknown (*śipiviṣṭa* Baudh. Hir. Āp. and *paṭára* TĀ), there are only two adjectives in the description of the *jumbaká* to which no parallel can be found in the Nāṭyaśāstra, viz. *śukla* "bright-coloured" (in all texts) and *kunakhín* "having diseased nails" Baudh.[411].

[411] Since for a comparison with the Vedic texts only the oldest description of the *vidūṣaka* is relevant, later sources (n. 387) have been ignored. Cf. Śāradātanaya (c. 1175–1250), Bhāvaprakāśana (GOS. No. 45, p. 289, lines 5–7) *vedavin narmavedī*

It is curious that even Bhat, who explained the *vidūṣaka* as originating in the Vedic Asura, has not noticed these similarities and dismissed the outward appearance of the *vidūṣaka* as a "stage trick" [412]. It is the more remarkable that this misconception did not blind him to one of the fundamental questions, which had almost universally been ignored in previous studies, viz., Why is it that only for the *vidūṣaka* such a detailed and rigid prescription is given?

It is true that the *vidūṣaka* shares some features with the servants (*dāsa*) but this only brings out more clearly the basic problem. It is natural that the low social order of the *dāsa* was represented on the stage by visual means, by making him a dwarf (*vāmana*), a hunch-back (*kubja*) or one with a distorted face (*vikṛtānana*). This, however, makes it the less explicable why a brahmin should be characterized by the same deformities. That Bhat's reference to a comic function cannot be correct, is apparent from the stereotyped and rigid character of Bharata's prescription and its impracticability. They lead to the conclusion that this is rather the last echo of an old tradition.

At this point the line of argument of this book has reached its completion. The comparison with the Vedic *jumbaká* has provided the final proof, it is hoped, that both the character and the traditional (but theoretical) outward appearance of the *vidūṣaka* date back to the Vedic ritual. It shows that there is, indeed, some reason to question the *hāsya*-character which even the Nāṭyaśāstra in some places ascribes to his strange appearance—at least, when its origin is considered. It now appears that it was still prescribed, in spite of its purely theoretical character, because it was dictated by a religious tradition. In its origin the deformity of the *vidūṣaka* had no connection whatsoever with dramatic performances but was simply the deformity of the Vedic scapegoat.

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yo netuḥ sa syād vidūṣakaḥ, khalatiḥ piṅgalākṣaś ca hāsyānukavibhūṣitaḥ, piṅgakeśo hariśmaśrur nartakaś ca vidūṣakaḥ, where "bald-headed" is contradicted by "tawny-haired" (see Bhat, p. 48), which in the Nāṭyaśāstra is said to be a characteristic of Daityas and Rākṣasas. Cf. 13.52f. *raktākṣaḥ piṅgakeśaś ca asito vikṛtasvaraḥ, rūkṣo nirbhartsanaparo raudraḥ so 'tha svabhāvajaḥ* (*so 'yam* 12.49 KM). For further references see R. Schmidt, Beiträge zur indischen Erotik, p. 145.

[412] Bhat, The Vidūṣaka, p. 44f.: "The physical deformity of the Vidūṣaka, on the contrary, is artificial; it is a stage trick to provoke laughter; or better perhaps, it can be traced to the hideousness of the Asura type, or the unusual tuft of hair of Nārada. Many of these traits were convenient and handy for evoking fun. A repeated use of them must have settled the outline of this character and turned him into a conventional figure of the stage". P. 53: "The appearance of the Vidūṣaka could have been a legacy from the earliest Asura type, as previously suggested. But it is possible that Bharata provided several attributes, to which a little addition was made afterwards, mainly with the intention of guiding the actor in preparing his make-up. It cannot be imagined that each and every detail in the prescription was intended to be strictly followed. The underlying idea in the appearance of the Vidūṣaka seems to be of a physical deformity only, which Bharata suggested by means of several attributes. It must have been naturally left to the actor (or the dramatist) to emphasise one or more of these attributes in the actual dramatic performance. After all, *some* incongruity in physical appearance would certainly be a source of laughter on the stage".

Needless to say, the Vedic *jumbaká* was not ridiculed for his corporeal defects, which were considered a *varuṇalakṣaṇam* (TĀ), a mark of Varuṇa. His deformity was due to his being a human image of Varuṇa and was the outward manifestation of the evil with which he was burdened. This is apparent from such a verse as AS. VII.65 (67).3

śyāvádatā kunakhínā baṇḍéna yát sahá 'simá
ápāmārga tváyā vayáṁ sárvaṁ tád ápa mṛjmahe
"If we have been together with one dark-toothed, ill-nailed, mutilated, by thee, O off-wiper, we wipe off all that" (Whitney),

where the ominous character of the defects is manifest. Cf. also, e.g., TS. II.5.1.7, where *śyāvádant* and *kunakhín* occur side by side with *khalatí*, *kāṇá* "one-eyed" and other defects.

There is, however, more to it than the problem of a traditional appearance. The *jumbaká* was a scapegoat but he was also a brahmin, who moreover impersonated Varuṇa. On p. 208 it has already been pointed out that Varuṇa, by taking upon himself that which is "badly sacrificed" (*dúriṣṭa*) acts as a divine scapegoat. Here we find finally an answer to a question which has been ignored in most studies on the *vidūṣaka*, viz. Why had the purported buffoon by definition to be a brahmin? The only exception is NŚ. 34.21, which also allows *avarajāḥ*. Heesterman has in various papers (e.g. WZKSO.8 (1964), p. 3) stressed the character of the brahmin in general as the purificator, who takes impurity upon himself. The equation *vidūṣaka* = brahmin = *jumbaká* = Varuṇa seems finally to disclose the original full function of the *vidūṣaka* in the dramatic performance. It may be suggested that this not only consisted in cooperating-in-contest with the *nāyaka*, but also in purifying the king, as the sponsor of the performance, by taking upon himself the latter's impurity. The statement of the Nāṭyaśāstra that the *pūrvaraṅga* was equal to a sacrifice may originally also have been true of the play itself. In the introduction it has been pointed out that the sponsor of a performance had the status of a *yajamāna* and must usually have been the king. Only a brahmin was able to redeem the king from evil by accepting the role of scapegoat. It was, it seems, because of his function of scapegoat, that the *vidūṣaka* had to be a brahmin. This lends some support to the explanation suggested on p. 176, that the Oṁkāra was named instead of Varuṇa as the protector of the *vidūṣaka* because the latter was a brahmin. In classical iconography no trace has been preserved of Varuṇa's deformity as the *jumbaká*. Varuṇa is "of white colour . . . draped in yellow garments, possesses a pacific look . . . karaṇḍamakuṭa, yajñopavīta" (Rao, l.c.), he has two or four arms and is seated on a *haṁsa*, *makara* or *jhaṣa* [413].

[413] The white colour (*śveta*) is also prescribed in the rules for the make-up of the Nāṭyaśāstra (23.91). For the classical iconography see Gopinath Rao, Elements of Hindu Iconography (Madras 1914–1916), II (1916), pp. 529–531 and *260* (texts); A. K. Coomaraswamy, Yakṣas (Washington D.C., 1928–1931), II, pp. 36–37, J. J. Meyer, Trilogie altindischer Mächte und Feste der Vegetation III (1937), p. 228,

19. VIDŪṢAKA AND VIṬA

In 1897 J. Huizinga concluded a critical discussion of the question as to whether the *vidūṣaka* was a real character in social life with the words: "Outside the drama, accordingly, the figure of the vidūṣaka proper does not seem to have developed" [414]. Since that time there has been a long but fruitless discussion on whether the *vidūṣaka* was a court jester or a character of town life – a question that seems at best of minor importance. Besides, the conclusions at which some authors arrived were far from clear. Thus Winternitz, Geschichte der indischen Litteratur III (1972), p. 172, wrote about the *viṭa:* "Er gehört jedenfalls dem städtischen Leben an und wird wohl auch aus volkstümlichen Spielen, in denen das Treiben der Hetären und ihrer Gefolgschaft dargestellt wurde, herübergenommen sein". One cannot but conclude that the *viṭa*, whatever his "origin" (which is Winternitz's main concern) was a stage character and nothing else.

As for the *vidūṣaka*, it will be sufficient to quote here two authors to show that a reappraisal of the problem is not out of place. Dasgupta writes: "It is thus not true that the *vidūṣakas* are Fools who attended the courts of kings only. They are mere comedians, who made their livelihood by their witticisms and also by friendly advice . . . were real characters in social life in the 2nd century B.C. and were not merely

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Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann, Les enseignements iconographiques de l'Agni-Purāṇa (Annales du Musée Guimet, Bibliothèque d'études, Tome 67, Paris 1963) pp. 131f. As for the *haṁsa* (goose) cf. Varāhamihira's Bṛhatsaṁhitā 58 (57).57 *haṁsārūḍhaś ca pāśabhṛd Varuṇaḥ*, Agnipur. 64.3 *haṁsaprastham* (but *makare, makarārūḍha:* 51.15, 56.23, 96.29). According to M.-Th. de Mallmann, p. 131 the *haṁsa* belongs to Varuṇa as sovereign of the Waters, whereas the *makara* characterizes him in his function of *lokapāla*. Cf. p. 132: "A cette tradition primitive [viz. of the Bṛhatsaṁhitā] se rattache la notion du roi des Eaux telle que l'atteste le *Viṣṇudh.*, notion encore préservée par l'*AgP.*, mais *uniquement lorsqu'il s'agit des rites de consécration des puits, mares et réservoirs*. Partout ailleurs, dans les textes comme sur les images l'anser est supplanté par le *makara*, tandis que Varuṇa se réduit progressivement à n'être plus que le Gardien de l'Occident". Cf. also p. 230. For the *makara* in general see A. K. Coomaraswamy, Yakṣas II, p. 13, who stresses his aquatic character (p. 34, etc., similarly M.-Th. de Mallmann, p. 233). On the other hand, attention has been drawn (with reference to F. D. K. Bosch, De Gouden Kiem, p. 170=The Golden Germ, p. 146) to the fact that the *makara* represents the nether world, his open mouth symbolizing the gate which is opened at sunrise and sunset. See Kuiper, Bijdragen Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde 107 (1951), p. 71 n. 5. This explains why it was forbidden to look at the rising and setting sun, cf. VaikhDS. III.1.14 *udaye 'stamaye ca sūryaṁ ne 'kṣeta*, Manu 4.37 *ne 'kṣeto 'dyantam ādityam nā 'staṁyantam*. At those moments, indeed, the gate of the nether world was opened. A third *vāhana* of Varuṇa is the *jhaṣa*, cf. Matsyapurāṇa 261.18 *jhaṣāsanagatam*, which is the correct reading and need not be emended (see de Mallmann, p. 131 n. 6).

[414] See J. Huizinga, De vidūṣaka in het indisch tooneel (Groningen, 1897), p. 57: "Buiten het drama schijnt zich dus de eigenlijke vidūṣaka-figuur niet ontwikkeld te hebben" and p. 63 "Voor een type uit de samenleving schijnt het woord vidūṣaka niet te zijn gebruikt. Een plaats uit het Daśakumāracarita kan een oogenblik doen denken, dat het woord een omgangstype aanduidt, maar zoowel de commentaren als de tekst zelf bewijzen, dat er van een acteur wordt gesproken". Gonda (n. 344), p. 408 contested this, but see below, p. 229.

dramatic invention". Bhat seems to hold a somewhat different view, as may be inferred from the following words: "It was customary for kings to maintain a court-jester. It is also possible to say that professional fools were fashionable in ancient India" [415]. Elsewhere (p. 134f.) he discusses the Vidūṣaka's "Function of a Court-Jester".

Bhat's bold statement naturally raises the question as to how it is possible to say anything definite about professional fools in ancient India and on what evidence the assumption of court-jesters is based. As far as I can see, the answer must be that what we actually know at this moment about Old Indian court-jesters is next to nothing. See n. 357. The reading *rājyavidūṣaka* at Sāgaranandin, NLRK 2014 is certainly corrupt and does not mean "court-jester" (Translation, p. 66). It is also clear that if the drama imitated contemporary court life, it would be even more difficult to explain why, then, a brahmin had to act as a jester. On the other hand, it will have been noticed that the picture of the "real characters in social life" that Dasgupta confidently presents is (and has to be) entirely based on the conventional part of the stage character of the drama. As the literature on the subject shows, it is, indeed, difficult to avoid circular argumentations when writing on this aspect of life in Ancient India, for which evidence is entirely lacking.

Although the distinction does not seem to be essential, it may be convenient for a critical discussion to follow those scholars who think the main problem is whether the *vidūṣaka* was a court-jester or a character in social life.

Gonda, l.c., points in a very general way to the existence of court-jesters in countries other than India. For the rest (pp. 410–415) he classifies the *vidūṣaka* on account of his physical deformity with the dwarfs, hunch-backs and cripples, who lived at royal courts, in India as well as elsewhere. See, however, above, p. 217. Bhat does not give the slightest argument for his statement quoted above. A. B. Keith [416] had already pointed out that in the epics with their profuse descriptions of court-life there is not a single reference to professional jesters. The same is true of Kauṭalya's Arthaśāstra (first century A.D.?) [417], where the word *vidūṣaka* does not occur either.

The situation is different in the Daśakumāracarita by Daṇḍin (c. 550 A.D.? see n. 432) where, apart from a single occurrence of the word *vidūṣaka*, which will be discussed below, the following passage must be mentioned. It is the description of a man who had access to the harem and who was sitting there near the king: "a skilful mind-reader, a royal favourite, an adept in song, dance, instrumental music and related arts, a connoisseur

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[415] See Dasgupta in: S. N. Dasgupta-S. K. De, A History of Sanskrit Literature, Classical Period, Vol. I (Calcutta 1962), p. 654f., and G. K. Bhat, The Vidūṣaka, p. 39f. Cf. also Bhat, p. 25: "The professional fool and the court-jester were known in ancient India; the tradition continues".

[416] The Sanskrit Drama, p. 28.

[417] See Hartmut Scharfe, Untersuchungen zur Staatsrechtslehre des Kauṭalya (Wiesbaden 1968), p. 334. Cf. also IIJ. 13, p. 286.

of unconventional women, shrewd, talkative, clever in periphrastical and enigmatical speeches (*bhaṅgi*), critical, a *buffoon* (*parihāsayitṛ*), a scandal-monger, an adept in calumny, ready to take bribes even from ministers of state, an instructor in all naughtiness, a pilot in the science of love (*kāmatantra*) and the king's servant from the time the former was a prince" [418]. Only in one point does this person resemble the *vidūṣaka:* while he is said to be a "pilot in the *kāmatantra*", the *vidūṣaka* is once called a *kāmatantrasaciva* "counsellor in matters of the *kāmatantra*, or in amorous adventures" (Mālavikāgnimitra IV.17.10). The passage has never to my knowledge been quoted as proof for the existence of a professional court-jester, and rightly so. Ryder's translation of *parihāsayitṛ* as "buffoon", which has been adopted in the preceding rendering, is hardly correct. The literal meaning to be expected would rather be "who elicits mockery, who induces others to mock or ridicule (persons)". Therefore, Agashe's note in the commentary to his edition (p. 342) "causing merriment or jovial" is less correct than "Spötter" in J. J. Meyer's translation. In other words: the *parihāsayitṛ* is not identical with the *vaihāsika* (p. 203). But even if he were a jester, professional or not, this passage shows eloquently what differentiates the *vidūṣaka* from any jester, viz. the latter's intelligence and quick wit. The *vidūṣaka* is never characterized as *paṭu* "shrewd" (see n. 360). It has generally been overlooked that he lacks the characteristic traits of the court-jester.

No more than in the works quoted can any reference to the *vidūṣaka* as a court-jester be found in the very detailed descriptions of court life in Bāṇa's Kādambarī and Harṣacarita (shortly after 600 A.D.). On the other hand, a comparison of the Kādambarī with the earlier Arthaśāstra shows that enumerations of persons living inside and outside the royal court are so much similar that one is bound to conclude that at an early date lists of this kind must have been conventional in literary use. Cf. on the one hand Kādambarī (ed. Peterson), p. 70,11 *-kubja-vāmana-kirātāḥ*, p. 74,4 *pranṛtta-kala-mūka-kubja-kirāta-vāmana-badhira-jaḍa-jana-* p. 89,6 *aneka-kubja-kirāta-varṣadhara-badhira-vāmanaka-mūka*, p. 89,10, *kubja-vāmana-kirāta*, p. 90,23 *purāṇapuruṣa-vāmana-*,
and, on the other hand,

Kauṭalya 1.12.9 *kubja-vāmana-kirāta-mūka-badhira-jaḍā-'ndha-cchadmano naṭa-nartaka-gāyana-vādaka-vāgjīvana-kuśīlavāḥ*, 2.27.25 *etena naṭa-nartaka-gāyaka-vādaka-vāgjīvana-kuśīlava-plavaka-śaubhika-cāraṇānām*, 7.17.34 *naṭa-nartaka-gāyaka-vādaka-vāgjīvana-kuśīlava-plavaka-śau(b)hika-*.

Cf. further also Kauṭalya 1.12.9 *sūdā-'rāḷika-snāpaka-saṁvāhakā-'staraka-kalpaka-prasādhako-'dakaparicārakāḥ*, 1.21.13 *snāpaka-saṁvāhakā-*

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[418] See Daśakumāracarita p. 130,21 ed. Agashe (p. 190, 3 ed. M. R. Kale, 1966). For *bahubhaṅgiviśārada* cf. p. 137,1-198,13 *bhaṅgibhāṣaṇarataḥ*. The *kumārasevaka* must have been different from the tutor (*kumārādhikṛta* NŚ. 34.83, 97, *kumārādhyakṣa* Kauṭalya, cf. Ghosh, Text I², Introduction pp. liii, lv, lxxi. Translation II¹ p. 210 n. 3). For *kāmatantra* cf. *madanatantra* Daśak. p. 53.11 and NŚ. 16.32; 24.150, 191, 201, 205 (not 220); 25.38, 53, 62, 65. Cf. further Mālavikāgnimitra IV.17 (10) and the Caturbhāṇī, passim (Schokker, The Pādatāḍitaka, pp. 53, 246, 341).

'staraka-rajaka-mālākāra-, 7.17.40 *sūdā-'rāḷika-snāpaka-saṁvāhakā-'staraka-kalpaka-prasādhako-'dakaparicārikair.*

These lists are quoted here because a work written about 970 A.D. shows in this respect a curious divergence from the Arthaśāstra. Somadeva Sūri gives in his Nītivākyāmṛta 14.8 a long list of persons who may act as spies for the king. After some other persons, he enumerates the following: *kirāta, yamapaṭṭika, ahituṇḍika, śauṇḍika, śaubhika, pāṭaccara, // viṭa, vidūṣaka, pīṭhamardaka, // naṭa, nartaka, gāyaka, vādaka, vāgjīvaka, . . ., sūda, ārālika, saṁvāhaka . . ., jaḍa, mūka, badhira, andha* [419].

It seems obvious that here Somadeva Sūri has simply copied a traditional list, such as found in Kauṭalya, of persons living inside and outside the court, irrespective of whether or not they could actually be used for the purpose of spying. Into this list, however, he has inserted the triad indicated above which does not occur in the Arthaśāstra. Nothing indicates that they were living at the court, nor that one or more of them were court-jesters. As far as I can see, nothing is known about the time when the jesters mentioned in late Indian tales made their entrance at the courts. Hertel refers to the Sanskrit "Erzählungsliteratur" [420] but Jīnakīrti, the author of the Pāla-gopāla-kathānaka, probably lived about 1450 A.D. The famous North-Indian jester Bīrbal, said to be of Āndhra origin, is also of late date. As for the Tamil collection of anecdotes about Teṉṉālu Irāmaṉ, it is still entirely obscure how one of the great Telugu epic poets, Tenāli Rāmakṛṣṇa (alias Rāmuḍu) became a court jester in Tamil legend, the less so as court jesters seem to have been completely unknown in classical Tamil literature. See above, p. 205 n. 356.

The triad, although quoted in an unusual order by Somadeva Sūri, had been well known long before him. It is, indeed, as traditional as the other lists, which he has compiled here. Its first occurrence is, it seems, in Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra, which is tentatively assigned to the first centuries of our era [421]. In this work the group always occurs in the compound *pīṭhamarda-viṭa-vidūṣaka*, except in 1.4.44–46, where a definition of each of the three terms is given and the last sūtra runs as follows: *ekadeśavidyas tu krīḍanako viśvāsyaś ca vidūṣakaḥ, vaihāsiko vā* [422]. In all other passages, with a single exception, the three words always occur in this compound, often in combination with terms denoting garland makers, etc. Cf. I.4.21 *bhojanānantaraṁ . . . pīṭhamarda-viṭa-vidūṣakāyattā vyāpārā*

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[419] Quoted from Oscar Botto's translation Il Nītivākyāmṛta di Somadeva Sūri (Torino 1962), p. 95.

[420] J. Hertel, Literarisches Zentralblatt 1917, 1198ff., "Jīnakīrtis Geschichte von Pāla und Gopāla", Ber. sächs. Gesellsch. d. Wiss. LXIX, 1917, p. 121 n. (both referred to by Winternitz, Gesch. d. indischen Litteratur III, p. 172 n. 1).

[421] "Er wird wohl an den Anfang unsrer Zeitrechnung gehören", R. Schmidt, Beiträge zur indischen Erotik[2] (1911), p. 12; fourth century A.D. (?) according to Winternitz, op. c., III, p. 540.

[422] Cf. Daśarūpaka 2.9 (13) *ekavidyo viṭaś cā 'nyo hāsyakṛc ca vidūṣakaḥ.*

divāśayyā ca, I.5.37 *rajaka-nāpita-mālākāra-gāndhika-saurika-bhikṣuka-gopālaka-tāmbūlika-sauvarṇika-pīṭhamarda-viṭa-vidūṣakādayo mitrāṇi*, II. 10.48 *tatra pīṭhamarda-viṭa-vidūṣakair nāyakaprayuktair upaśamitaroṣā tair evā 'nunītā* [423], VI.1.8–9 *yair nāyakam āvarjayed anyābhyaś cā 'vacchindyāt ... te tv ārakṣapuruṣā dharmādhikaraṇasthā daivajñā ... pīṭhamarda-viṭa-vidūṣaka-mālākāra-gāndhika-* [424] *śauṇḍika-rajaka-nāpita-bhikṣukāḥ*. The only exception occurs in VI.1.22–23, where the *vaihāsika* is mentioned along with the *pīṭhamarda* [425].

Before discussing later occurrences of the triad it may be useful first to consider the evidence of the Kāmasūtra more closely. It has long been observed that Vātsyāyana in his Handbook of Erotics apparently imitates Kauṭalya [426]. Winternitz remarks: "Das Kāmasūtra spricht da z.B. von den Freunden des Liebhabers und den Liebesbotinnen nicht viel anders als das Arthaśāstra von den Freunden des Königs, den Spionen und Gesandten". (l.c.). Thus, after giving separate definitions of the *pīṭhamarda*, the *viṭa* and the *vidūṣaka*, the Kāmasūtra characterizes them together in the words (I.4.34) *ete veśyānāṁ nāgarakāṇāṁ ca mantriṇaḥ sandhivigrahani-yuktāḥ* "These are the ministers of the courtezans and men about town, to whom treaties and wars are entrusted" [427]. It is instructive to compare this definition with the one given in a literary treatise (Agnipurāṇa 339.39)

pīṭhamardo viṭaś caiva vidūṣaka iti trayaḥ,
śṛṅgāre narmasacivā nāyakasyā 'nunāyakāḥ

"The pīṭhamarda, viṭa and vidūṣaka, these three are the companions of the nāyaka in his erotic amusements and his attendants".

On the other hand, there is a clear interrelation between the Kāmasūtra and the dramaturgic handbooks. The central figure of the Kāmasūtra is

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[423] Cf., e.g., SD. 3.40 *kupitavadhūmānabhañjanāḥ* and further Rasamañjarī, Kāvyānuśāsana and Rasaratnahāra (Schmidt, Beiträge, p. 143f.).

[424] Cf. also NŚ. 34.55 (24.36 KM) *chattraśayyāsane yuktā tathā vyajanakarmaṇi* (56), *saṁvāhane ca gandhe ca tathā caiva prasādhane, tathā 'bharaṇasaṁyoge mālya-saṁgrahaṇeṣu ca* (57) *vijñeyā nāmataḥ sā tu nṛpateḥ paricārikā* = 24.53B[1] *śayyāpālī chatradhārī tathā vyajanadhāriṇī* (54) *saṁvāhikā gandhayoktrī tathā caiva prasādhikā, tathā 'bharaṇayoktrī ca mālyasaṁyojikā tathā* (55) *evaṁvidhā bhaveyur yās tā jñeyā paricārikāḥ*. Lüders, Philologica Indica, p. 416 n. 1 quotes Vidhurapaṇḍitajātaka (545), Gatha 59 *mālākāre ca rajake ganthike atha dussike, suvaṇṇakāre maṇikāre maṇimhi passa nimittaṁ* and gives in the Addenda the correct explanation of *ganthike* = *gāndhikaḥ*.

[425] *bhāvajijñāsārthaṁ paricārakamukhān saṁvāhaka-gāyana-vaihāsikān gamye tad-bhaktān vā praṇidadhyāt, tadabhāve pīṭhamardādīn*, where the commentary paraphrases *vaihāsiko: vidūṣakaḥ* and *pīṭhamardādī 'ty: ādiśabdād viṭa-mālākāra-gāndhika-śauṇḍikādayaḥ sahāyāḥ*.

[426] For stylistic reminiscences see, e.g., R. Shamasastry, Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra translated[5] (Mysore, 1956), p. xi and further Winternitz, op. c., III, p. 537 n. 1 with references. Cf. also Friedrich Wilhelm "Nāṭyaśāstra and Nītiśāstra" in Festschr. Słuszkiewicz, pp. 271–276.

[427] The commentary says *ete nāgarakāṇāṁ pārśvavartitvād upanāgarakāḥ*. Gonda (n. 344), p. 409 n. 8, had already pointed to similarities between the *nāgaraka* and the *svāmin* and referred to Kāmasūtra 308–310 and Arthaśāstra 96.

the *nāgaraka* "man about town, elegant", a member of a refined leisure class, of whose daily life this work gives an idealized picture. Rather than describing, however, the Kāmasūtra prescribes. It lays down the rules which one has to comply with in order to become a perfect gentleman, a *vidagdhajana*[428] as the commentary paraphrases the word *nāgaraka*. Several times, however, the commentary refers to him as the *nāyaka*, the technical term for the hero in the drama, and this term is also used in the Kāmasūtra itself, e.g., I.5.28ff., II.10.46, 47, etc. In other words, there is a tendency in the Kāmasūtra to describe the ideal "reality" in terms of stage characters. Inversely, it is a well-known fact that a small Kāmatantra has been inserted in the Nāṭyaśāstra[429].

All this must be borne in mind when one tries to evaluate the importance of the fact that the Kāmasūtra mentions the *vidūṣaka* as a synonym of the *vaihāsika*, the friend and confident of the *nāgaraka*, for whom he is a plaything (*krīḍanaka*)[430]. Two things must here obviously be distinguished, viz. the formalization of the enumeration of groups of occupations and, on the other hand, the institutionalization of functions attributed to certain characters who may or may not have existed in Old Indian society.

To the first category belong, e.g., *sūdārālika-, snāpaka-saṁvāhaka-* (*nāpita-* Kāmas.), *rajaka-mālākāra-gāndhika-* (Kauṭ, Kāmas.), *naṭa-nartaka-gāyaka-vādaka-, kubja-kirāta-vāmana-jaḍa-mūka-badhira-* (Kauṭ., Kād.). The actual existence of these figures in Indian social life cannot, of course, be questioned but it is characteristic that every author, be it of theoretical treatises such as the Kāmasūtra and the Arthaśāstra, or of literary compositions, such as the Kādambarī and a Pāli Jātaka, when referring to these figures, automatically fell back upon traditional lists. However authentic and "real" every member of the groups enumerated may have been in social life, it cannot be denied that every author here follows a fixed *literary pattern*. His description of reality, accordingly, is not based on his own direct observation but is indirect and derivational. Nothing proves more impressively the artificiality of these lists than the fact that in a description of the rejoicing in a palace at the birth of a prince a prose kāvya sums up almost the same groups, in more or less the same conventional order, as are found in the Arthaśāstra as lists of persons who can be used as spies. An instructive instance is also Somadeva Sūri's list of prospective spies, which is a mere concoction of the various existing lists of his predecessors, without much concern for the possibility of using them as such in actual life.

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[428] "ein gebildeter Mensch" (R. Schmidt). The same is no doubt meant by the term *nāgarikapuruṣa* in Daśakumāracarita p. 42,8 (ed. Agashe), where all the three commentaries explain *nāgarikā nipuṇāḥ*.

[429] 24.94–319C. = 22.95–323B., 22.89–312 KM. For the use of the term *kāmatantra* see above n. 418 and cf. P. V. Kane, History of Sanskrit Poetics[4], p. 43. As for *nāyaka* in the sense of "husband" (Daśak. 49,15 Agashe), this is clearly a "literary" word.

[430] Bhat (n. 344) p. 135 rightly observes that the *vidūṣaka* is an "object of jest, rather than being a jester".

As for the institutionalization, it is sufficient to point to the "amusement-companions" (*narmasacivas*) of the "elegant". In normal conditions of life it is natural that a young man of this class should have had some friends who may have been living at his expense since he, as a *nāgaraka*, had by definition some wealth. Occasionally one or more of these friends may have been a bit of a comic. When, however, it is prescribed that in the company of a *nāgaraka* there must be a *vaihāsika*, whose characteristics are specified, it would seem that we have left the solid ground of reality and are moving in a fictitious world. When, further, this comic is generally called a *vidūṣaka*, while the *nāgaraka* is sometimes denoted by the term *nāyaka*, the influence of the drama and dramaturgic theory can hardly be denied. It has been argued above that in the drama the *vidūṣaka* must originally have had a definite function, which was to help and, at the same time, unintentionally to counteract the hero. Even in the most abstract theory of a man about town, however, it would be difficult to conceive of a particular function of a comic, let alone of a *vidūṣaka*. And when, finally, this *vidūṣaka* is in the Kāmasūtra almost exclusively mentioned as a member of the group *pīṭhamarda-viṭa-vidūṣaka-*, there can be little doubt, as far as this text is concerned, about the purely theoretical character of this group. On the other hand, we have seen (p. 226) that the Kāmasūtra was apparently the first text in which this triad was added to the list taken over from Kauṭalya and probably other theoretical handbooks. The conclusion, then, must be that, since Vātsyāyana cannot have coined this compound himself but must have borrowed it from some dramaturgic treatise, and since it is still unknown to Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra, the group must have been created by the author of a handbook on dramatic art which was in current use in the first centuries of our era.

A final remark may not be out of order here. Later dramaturgists often refer to this triad as the *narmasacivas* "boon companions" or "friends in sport" [431]. The same word, however, is also used in stories for the companions of a young prince, such as Udayana. Gonda has rightly remarked that the use of the same term does not imply that such a *narmasaciva* was identical with the *vidūṣaka* (op. c., p. 407).

As we have seen, the compound *pīṭhamarda-viṭa-vidūṣaka-* must have been in current use from the first centuries of our era onwards. One of the oldest texts in which it occurs, besides the Kāmasūtra, is Daṇḍin's Daśakumāracarita (c. 550 A.D.?) [432]. Among the various ways in which

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[431] Thus A. B. Keith, Sanskrit Drama, pp. 188 and 311, as a translation of *narmasuhṛd*. Monier-Williams renders *narmasaciva* by " 'amusement-companion', promoter of the amusement of a prince". Cf. Sāgaranandin, NLRK. 2200 *antaḥpuracaro rājñāṁ narmāmātyaḥ prakīrtitaḥ*. A similar expression is Pkt. *kāmatantasaciva* used with reference to the *vidūṣaka* Mālavikāgnimitra IV.17 (10) etc. (see Schokker, Pādatāḍitaka, p. 246).

[432] Daśakumāracarita, p. 42.8 ed. Agashe (p. 67, 3 ed. Kale). For the date of the Daśakumāracarita see Mirashi, ABORI. 26, pp. 20–31, Studies in Indology, pp. 176–177 ("not long after 550 A.D."). See also S. K. De, History of Sanskrit Literature, p. 209 (contemporaneous with, *inter alia*, the Caturbhāṇī, the oldest of which is dated between 455 and 510 A.D. by G. H. Schokker, The Pādatāḍitaka

a young courtesan is "advertised" in the town the author mentions *pīṭhamarda-viṭa-vidūṣakair bhikṣukyādibhiś ca nāgarikapuruṣasamavāyeṣu rūpaśīlamādhuryaprastāvanā* "having her beauty, character and sweetness praised in the gatherings of men about town by *pīṭhamardas*, *viṭas*, *vidūṣakas* and female mendicants, etc." [433]. It is again the same stereotyped

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of Śyāmilaka, p. 25), Kuiper, Journal Madras University 28-2, pp. 121–125 (anterior to the Mṛcchakaṭikā). Otherwise J. Nobel, ZII. 5, p. 149 and cf. JORMadras 19 (1952), p. 161 (end of the seventh century), M. Krishmachariar, History of Classical Skt. Literature (1937-1970), p. 457 (between 635 and 700 A.D.). These dates would seem too late.

[433] See p. 42,7 ed. Agashe, v. l. *rūpaśīlaśilpasaundaryamādhuryaprastāvanā*, p. 69,10 ed. Godbole, p. 67,2 ed. Kale. *nāgarikapuruṣāḥ* (commentary: *nipuṇāḥ*) is "men about town" (Ryder), not "fatsoenlijke lieden" (decent people, Huizinga, op. c., p. 63), nor "Männer der Stadt" (J. J. Meyer).In the Daśakumāracarita *nāgara* and *nāgarika* are used in three different meanings:

1) "townsman, citizen", cf. 54,13 *nāgaramukhyeṣu* (: 54.21 *pauramukhyaiḥ*), 58,18 *nāgarikebhyaḥ* (Padacandrikā: *nāgavāsilokebhyaḥ*, read *nagara-*), 63,9 *nāgarikavara* (Padac.: *nāgarikaśreṣṭha*) and Pūrvapīṭhikā 23,20 *nāgarikajana* (: 22,23 *paurajana*) "townspeople". Cf. also, e.g., Bṛhatkathāślokasaṁgraha, ed. F. Lacôte, 1.2, 17.102 *nāgara*, 17.93 *nāgaraka* and Pali *nāgara* "citizen", Pkt. *ṇāyara* and see Turner, CDIAL. 7043. More common is *paura*, e.g., Daśak. 47,2 *pauravṛddhānām* (Padac.: *nāgarikaśreṣṭhānām*), 64, 19 *pauravṛddhaiḥ*, 54,21 *pauramukhyaiḥ*, etc.

2) "City Superintendent" (Jolly-Schmidt, Arthaśāstra II, p. 17 ad Kauṭalya 6.2), "police officer" (Beng. *nāyer*, *nāyar* "agent, steward", Turner, l.c.). Cf. Śivarāma Tripāṭhin in his Bhūṣaṇā ad Daśak. 49,11 *nāgarikabalam : nagararakṣākartuḥ*, *bhāṣayā "kotwāl" ityākhyasya ; balam : sainyam*. In connection with the last words attention may be drawn to Mṛcch. VI.16.1 *seṇāvaī* beside VI.27.4 *padhāṇadaṇḍadhārao* and IX.23.3 *nagararakṣādhikṛta* (the last word also occurs in a commentary on Śakuntalā VI.0.1 as a gloss on *nāgarika*), which are used in the same sense. In spite of the incorrect gloss *kārāpatir : nāgarikaḥ*, which the commentaries ad Daśak. 58,16 quote from the Vaijayantī, the word *nāgarika* is used in the sense "Chief police officer, superintendent of the city police" in 58,16 *nāgarikaḥ*, 49,11 *nāgarikabalam* [=51,6 *rakṣikabalam*], 57,10 *nāgarikapuruṣān*, 59,11 *nāgarikapuruṣaiḥ* (Padacandrikā *kārāpatipuruṣaiḥ ;* =63,12 *rakṣikapuruṣaiḥ*). Whether the *nāgarika* also functioned as a judge, as is suggested by the gloss *nāgarikasaṁsadi* on 42,14 *adhikaraṇe* in the commentary Bhūṣaṇā, must here be left open. As for 51.3, where Agashe's text has *samuccalantau nāgarikasaṁpātena* and the third edition by N. B. Godabole and K. P. Parab (Bombay 1898) *samuccalantau nāgarikasaṁpāte* it is clear that the Padacandrikā (by Kavīndrācārya Sarasvatī, c. 1650 A.D.) misinterprets the passage by paraphrasing *nagarasthalokasaṁmarde(na)*. *saṁpāta* no doubt means "appearance" (see PW.) and what Daṇḍin's adventurers are afraid of is not the appearance of townsfolk but of policemen, cf. 139,17 *rājapuruṣasaṁpātabhītaḥ*. Therefore, only the variant reading *nāgarikapuruṣasaṁpāte* (see Agashe's critical apparatus) makes sense: the Bhūṣaṇā rightly paraphrases *nagararakṣakapuruṣasaṁpāte*. As for *sam-uc-cal-*, its meaning can (in spite of PW. II, col. 970) hardly have much differed from that of *uc-cal-* "to start" (46,5 *nagarāyo 'dacalam*, 49,10 *tricaturāṇi padāny udacalam*, 57,10 *asidvitīyo raṁhasā pareṇo 'dacalam*). The words *samuccalantau nāgarikapuruṣasaṁpāte* accordingly mean "being off at the appearance of policemen" (Meyer: "uns davon machend, da die Stadtwächter herbeistürzten"; incorrect Ryder: "we fell in with policemen"). Cf. also Kālid. Śak. VI.0.1, Vikram. V.4.1.

3) *nāgara*, *nāgaraka*, *nāgarika* "refined; fine gentleman, elegant, man about town" (PW. "gewandt, geschickt, gerieben, fein"; cf. A. K. Coomaraswamy,

triad, which cannot, therefore, prove very much for social life in Indian towns of that period.

In later times the group frequently recurs in the writings of theorists, such as Dhanaṁjaya (between 974 and 996 A.D.) in his Daśarūpaka II.8–9[434], probably about the same time in the Agnipurāṇa 339.39[435], later (c. 1175–1250) in Śāradātanaya's Bhāvaprakāśana, p. 93, 21f.[436] and (in the 14th century?) in Vāgbhaṭa's Kāvyānuśāsana, p. 62[437].

Not before the fourteenth century an innovation was introduced by the addition of the *ceṭa* "servant" as a fourth member to the traditional group. As early as NŚ. 35.77–80, in a passage which must reflect an old tradition because it contains the description of the *vidūṣaka* as a *jumbaká*, the characteristics of respectively the *viṭa*, the *śakāra*, the *vidūṣaka* and the *ceṭa* are summed up. From such passages the *ceṭa* may, in course of time, have come to be incorporated in the triad. It is significant, however, that this is only found in works on literary aesthetics. Cf. (between 1300 and 1384) Viśvanātha, Sāhityadarpaṇa 3.39–40 and 3.46[438], (between 1300 and 1350) Vidyānātha, Pratāparudrīya I.38[439], (between 1340 and 1360) Śiṅgabhūpāla, Rasārṇavasudhākara I.89[440], (between 1450 and 1500)

JAOS. 48, p. 265). Pāli has *nāgarika* "citizen-like, urbane, polite". Cf. Latin *urbānus*, Greek *asteîos* "polite, refined, elegant, witty". In this sense it is used in Daśak. 42,8 *nāgarikapuruṣasamavāyeṣu* (Ryder: "in gatherings of men about town") quoted above, and 52,23 *sāndrādaraḥ samāgaman nāgarajanaḥ* "the connoisseurs gathered with tense anticipation" (Ryder: "gay society"; not "die Leute" Meyer. Different from 52,23 *paurajanaḥ*. The gloss *nāgarikalokaḥ* in the Padacandrikā is ambiguous). Cf. Bṛhatkathāślokasaṁgraha 24.44 *nāgarikaḥ*, v. l. *nāgarakaḥ* "amateur", 9.19 (cf. vv. 32, 34, 35) *nāgarakaḥ* "un roué, un coureur de bonnes fortunes", 7.45 *nāgarakaṁmanyaḥ* "qui se croit bel esprit", 32.123 *nāgarikaṁmanyā* "femme qui se juge fine", 9.34, 102 *nāgarakatā* "politesse", 9.81 *nāgarakatvam*, idem. Cf. also Kālidāsa, Śak. V.1.9 *nāgarikavṛttyā saṁjñāpayai 'nām* "tell her politely", Vikram. II.11.20 *ṇāario si* "you are a refined person", III.13.3 *ṇāariā* "gallants". According to Sāgaranandin, NLRK. 2226 the names of *nāgarāḥ* in dramas should end in *-ila: Rāmila-Kāmilāhvānā nāgarāḥ prakīrtitāḥ* and they always address a courtezan with the term *vāsu* (2228). The *nāgaraka* is the central person of the Kāmasūtra (see p. 228).

[434] *patākānāyakas tv anyaḥ pīṭhamardo vicakṣaṇaḥ, tasyaivā 'nucaro bhaktaḥ kiṁcidūnaś ca tadguṇaiḥ* (9) *ekavidyo viṭaś cānyo hāsyakṛc ca vidūṣakaḥ.*

[435] *pīṭhamardo viṭaś caiva vidūṣaka iti trayaḥ, śṛṅgāre narmasacivā nāyakasyā 'nunāyakāḥ.* For the date of the Agnipurāṇa see P. V. Kane, History of Dharma Śāstra I, p. 170ff. (about 900 A.D.), History of Sanskrit Poetics[4], p. 9 (after 1050?), S. K. De, Sanskrit Poetics I, p. 99 ("later than the middle of the 9th century").

[436] According to Bhat (n. 344), p. 177 n. 2.

[437] See R. Schmidt, Beiträge zur indischen Erotik, p. 144.

[438] 3.39 *dūrānuvartini syāt tasya prāsaṅgiketivṛtte tu, kiṁcit tadguṇahīnaḥ sahāya evā 'sya pīṭhamardākhyaḥ* (40) *śṛṅgāre 'sya sahāyā viṭa-ceṭa-vidūṣakādyāḥ syuḥ, bhaktā narmasu nipuṇāḥ kupitavadhūmānabhañjanāḥ śuddhāḥ.* (3.46) *uttamāḥ pīṭhamardādyāḥ madhyau viṭa-vidūṣakau, tathā śakāra-ceṭādyā adhamāḥ parikīrtitāḥ.*

[439] *eṣāṁ nāyikānukūlane pīṭhamarda-viṭa-ceṭa-vidūṣaka-nāmānaḥ sahāyāḥ.*

[440] He also gives *pīṭhamarda, viṭa, ceṭa* and *vidūṣaka* according to Bhat, p. 177 n. 2.

Bhānudatta, Rasamañjarī fol. 72b[441], and the Rasaratnahāra 52–53, which quotes Bhānu[442].

Everywhere the *ceṭa* is inserted between the *viṭa* and the *vidūṣaka*, in spite of the fact that these two belong to a higher category than he. R. Schmidt rightly remarks in his book on erotics: "Den nur für das Drama in Betracht kommenden *ceṭa* lassen wir hier unberücksichtigt . . .[443]".

The evidence quoted allows but one conclusion: there is no indication to prove the existence of either court-jesters or of professional buffoons in general and all references in literature to the *vidūṣaka* are ultimately derived from the dramatic character. Huizinga, who had to base his conclusion on very slender evidence, has here, as often, intuitively grasped the real state of things. It is significant that his words quoted in the beginning of this section, viz. "Outside the drama the *vidūṣaka* proper does not, accordingly, seem to have developed" imply the preconceived idea that there was a dramatic character, first and foremost, who might have "developed" in social life but did not. There is a curious conflict here between an intuitive insight and a certain lack of logic. How could dramatic characters, who belong to the stage, develop to figures in social life? It follows that the *vidūṣaka* whom V. S. Agrawala thinks he has detected on a terracotta panel in the Mathura Museum[444] must, if the identification is correct, also portray a dramatic scene.

Gonda, who disputed Huizinga's conclusion[445], rightly recognized that the real problem is the fact that the characteristic traits of the *vidūṣaka* cannot be explained from reality and belong to the stage but he misinterpreted, like Konow[446], the occurrence of the *vidūṣaka* in the Kāmasūtra and the Daśakumāracarita.

A few words must finally be said about the other *narmasacivas*, the *pīṭhamarda* and the *viṭa*.

As for the *pīṭhamarda*, this character is unknown to Bharata. It has been suggested that he was no longer used as a dramatic figure at that time. However that may be, not before Rudraṭa (between 825 and 850 A.D.)[447] and Dhanaṁjaya (between 974 and 996 A.D.)[448] is he mentioned by theorists of dramaturgy. Bhavabhūti substitutes him for

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[441] *teṣāṁ ca narmasacivāḥ pīṭhamardo viṭas tathā, ceṭo vidūṣaka iti caturdhā Bhānuno 'ditaḥ.* Cf. Schmidt, Beiträge, p. 199. On the date of Bhānudatta see S. K. De, Sanskrit Poetics I, p. 246, P. V. Kane, History of Sanskrit Poetics, p. 308.

[442] See Schmidt, p. 144.

[443] Beiträge, p. 146.

[444] See Bhat, p. 54 with plate.

[445] See Acta Orientalia 19 (1943), p. 407f. He then adds that it should not be inferred, however, that the character of the *vidūṣaka* only occurs in dramas and refers to the Daśakumāracarita and the Kāmasūtra.

[446] See Konow, Das indische Drama, p. 15: . . . ". . . nicht bloss im Drama . . ., sondern auch z.B. im Kāmaśāstra voll entwickelt vorlag".

[447] Kāvyālaṁkāra 12.13f., Śṛṅgāratilaka 1.39f.

[448] Daśarūpaka 2.8. For further references see R. Schmidt, Beiträge zur indischen Erotik², p. 142f.

the *vidūṣaka*[449]. Dhanika in his commentary on the Daśarūpaka[450] illustrates the rules regarding the *pīṭhamarda* by a reference to Makaranda in the Mālatīmādhava and Sugrīva in the Rāmāyaṇa. For all practical purposes, however, he was unknown in theatrical art. Hence the conflicting definitions given by later theorists[451]. Cf. Kāmasūtra 1.4.31!

There remain two problems. Apart from Mhbh. IV, App. 21.11 crit. ed. (IV.21.33 Bombay ed.) *rathinaḥ pīṭhamardāś ca hastyārohāś ca naigamāḥ*, where some kind of warrior seems to have been meant[452], the word is met with in the Aupapātika Sūtra as a term for a State official[453]. It is not necessary for our purpose to enter more deeply into this matter.

On the other hand, if it is true that Vātsyāyana has taken over the triad *pīṭhamarda-viṭa-vidūṣaka-* from an earlier rhetorician, while the Nāṭyaśāstra does not recognize the *pīṭhamarda* as a special character, there must consequently have been a different school of theorists of dramaturgy anterior to the Kāmasūtra.

As for the *viṭa*, he might at first sight seem to have a better chance of having been a special character in the society of an Old Indian town. This was particularly defended by Gonda[454].

To the authors of the Nāṭyaśāstra he is simply a stage character. It gives a definition (35.77) and prescribes that he is to be used in the prakaraṇa (20.53) and the bhāṇa (20.110 *dhūrta-viṭa-saṁprayojyaḥ*). As S. K. De observes[455], "The viṭa, usually neglected in the serious drama,

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[449] See Bhat, pp. 39, 93.

[450] ad Daśarūpaka 2.8.

[451] Rudraṭa, Kāvyālaṁkāra 12.13 *kupitastrīprasādakaḥ;* similarly Bhānudatta, Rasamañjarī and, for all three *narmasacivas*, Rudraṭa 12.13–15, Viśvanātha, Sāhityadarpaṇa 3.40 and Vāgbhaṭa, Kāvyānuśāsana, p. 62. Agnipurāṇa 339.40 has *pīṭhamardaḥ samb(h)alakaḥ* "matchmaker", whereas Sāgaranandin, NLRK. 2201 explains "The king's friend in his intrigue with the courtesan is called *viṭa;* he who teaches her her craft is the *pīṭhamarda*" (*veśyāṁ prati sakhā rājño viṭa ity abhidhīyate, tadvṛttācāryakaṁ prāptaḥ pīṭhamardaḥ prakīrtitaḥ*). Similarly Halāyudha.

[452] Nīlakaṇṭha's gloss *rājapriyāḥ* is certainly no more than a wild guess, based on *nāyakasya priye 'pi ca*, which he quotes from the Medinīkośa.

[453] Otto Stein, Jinist Studies, p. 85f.

[454] Acta Or. 19, p. 408: "Dass auch der *viṭa-*, "Lebemann" oder lustiger Gesell eine bekannte Figur in bestimmten Kreisen des altindischen Lebens, nicht nur eine Theaterrolle was, brauche ich nicht nachzuweisen; er wird in mehreren Werken der Sanskrit Literatur erwähnt". Gonda refers to R. Schmidt, Beitr. zur ind. Erotik, p. 144f. and Kathāsaritsāgara 6.51ff., PW. VI, col. 1030. Schmidt's material, however, is *entirely* taken from dramaturgic handbooks. As for the Kathāsaritsāgara, see below.

[455] Sanskrit Poetics II, p. 270 n. 25. Later theoreticians mention some kinds of plays in which a *viṭa* is acting, such as the *durmallī* or *durmallikā*, first mentioned, it seems, in the Śṛṅgāraprakāśa (between 1000 and 1050) and the Bhāvaprakāśana (between 1175 and 1250), then in the Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa (between 1200 and 1250), which describes it in detail (3186ff.): it consists of four acts in which successively the *viṭa*, the *vidūṣaka*, the *pīṭhamarda* and the *nāgara* appear. Similarly Sāhityadarpaṇa 6.303–305. As an instance is quoted the play *Bindumatī*. According to the Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa 3149 the *viṭa* appears as an *upanāyaka* in the Prasthāna (cf. Lévi, p. 148).

except in *Cārudatta* and *Mṛcchakaṭika*, appears in all his glory in the Bhāṇa, for which he is prescribed as the hero". It should be added that the *viṭa* occurs as a character in the Nāgananda, Act III and that the words *eṣa hi Mṛdaṅgavāsulako nāma purāṇanāṭakaviṭaḥ* in Śūdraka's Padmaprābhṛtaka 20.5 have been interpreted as referring to the role of a *viṭa* in old dramas [456], although the term admits of different explanations. For the *viṭa* as a special figure in social life, however, the evidence is virtually non-existent. In the four earliest bhāṇas of the so-called Caturbhāṇī the *viṭa* is already a conventional stage-character [457]. Therefore, they do not allow any inference about the occurrence of such a character in the actual town-life of that time.

Apte, however, rightly remarks [458] that in non-dramatic Sanskrit literature *viṭa* means "1. A paramour; (Māl. 8.8; Śiś. 4.48). 2. A voluptuary, sensualist (BhāgP. X.1327)". This distinction, which is better than that of PW. VI, col. 1030, accounts for almost all the passages where the word occurs.

1. "Lover, paramour": Mālatīmādhava VIII.8ab

tvadvallabhaḥ kva nu tapasvijanasya hantā,
kanyāviṭaḥ patir asau parirakṣatu tvām

"Where, then, is your beloved, who only kills ascetics? Let this violator of girls (commentary: *kanyādūṣakaḥ*), your lord, now protect you!" For *pati* "legal lover" (=*priya*) cf. Daśak. 205,15 Agashe. In Śiśupālavadha IV.48 *madhukaraviṭapānamitās tarupaṅktīr*, where there is a pun (*madhukaraviṭa-pānam itās* and *madhukara-viṭapā'namitās*), *madhukaraviṭa-* means "the bees acting as lovers". In Pūrṇabhadra's Pañcatantra, p. 210 line 19 it is said of a *puṁścalī: atha pūrvaparicitaviṭagṛhe gatvā* "Having gone to the house of her paramour, with whom she had become acquainted before" [459]. In Edgerton's reconstruction the text reads *dūtikayā viṭam ānayya* "having sent a female messenger for her paramour" and in the same text he occurs again p. 335 line 5 *asmiṁś (cā) 'ntare (saśapathaṁ) viṭenā 'bhihitā* "meanwhile the paramour said to her", but at the end of this story this *dayitajana* (p. 334 line 7) is called her *jāra* (p. 337 line 1). This is, indeed, one of the common meanings of *viṭa*. It is thus used in Pūrṇabhadra, p. 223 line 19 *tasya bhāryā puṁścaly anyāsaktamanā ajasraṁ*

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[456] See G. H. Schokker, The Pādatāḍitaka of Śyāmilaka, pt I, p. 43. Improbable is the interpretation by Moticandra and Agrawala, Śṛṅgār-hāṭa (Bombay 1960), p. 26, according to which the person concerned had formerly been an active actor in plays performed in the brothel but now, owing to his age, had become a mere *viṭa*.

[457] See Schokker, p. 45 n. 137.

[458] V. Sh. Apte, The practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 2nd ed. (1912); similarly in the new ed. by Gode and Karve, vol. III (1959), s.v.

[459] Similarly Kosegarten, Textus ornatior, p. 186 line 1 and the edition Benares 1930 (The Haridas Sanskrit Series No. 13), p. 132 line 24. Less clear is the reading in the Bombay Skt. Series (ed. Bühler), IV, p. 18 line 16 *tataś ca paricitaṁ kaṁcid viṭagṛhaṁ gatvā.*

viṭāya sakhaṇḍa(ghṛtān) ghṛtapūrān kṛtvā . . . prayacchati, and p. 224 line 16 *atha tasyā hṛdayavallabho viṭas . . .*[460].

2. "sensualist": In this more general sense the word occurs, e.g., at Daśakumāracarita p. 136, 21 (ed. Agashe) *viṭavidheyatayā* "on account of the king being in the power of the apostles of sensuality" [461] and similarly in the Pūrvapīṭhikā, p. 2,19, where the young Kāmapāla is said to be *viṭa-naṭa-vāranārī-parāyaṇo durvinītaḥ* "only caring for bon-vivants, actors and harlots, and undisciplined"; further at Kathāsaritsāgara 6.51 *viṭaprāya* "a man who was a bit of a roué" [462], 6.58, where *viṭa* refers to persons frequenting a brothel and also 32.166 *vidagdhā api vañcyante viṭavarṇanayā striyaḥ* "Even clever women are deceived by the tales of a rogue" (impostor, transl. Tawney). In his translation of the Rājataraṅgiṇī Aurel Stein translates *viṭa* by "roguish", "parasites", "wicked men". The commentary Laghudīpikā ad Daśakumāracarita 42.8 quotes *"gamyo viṭaḥ pāllaviko bhujaṅgaḥ" iti Bhāguriḥ*. Viṭas did exist, consequently, but not as the stereotyped characters as which they have become known from the plays ever since the Cārudatta and the Caturbhāṇī. Sometimes, it is true, they are mentioned in connection with professional groups, as in the Pūrvapīṭhikā quoted above and, e.g., in Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa 68.26

karoti gāyatāṁ vittaṁ nṛtyatāṁ ca prayacchati
bandināṁ atha sūtānāṁ viṭānāṁ lāsyapāṭhinām

"He bestows wealth on singers and dancers, and on minstrels, bards, sycophants (and) those who are skilled in drama" (transl. Pargiter),

cf. Rājataraṅgiṇī 5.352 *viṭa-bandy-ādi-*.

Therefore, the case of the *viṭa* is different from that of the *vidūṣaka*. He did exist in Old Indian society but, like the *ceṭas* "servants", he had at the time of the Nāṭyaśāstra already become a conventional stage-character. The existence of a *viṭaśāstra* (quoted by the Bṛhatkathāśloka-saṁgraha 10.69) points to the same conclusion. Cf. also Śāradātanaya, p. 289,11 *viṭaḥ prākṛtavādī ca prāyo . . .* The evidence quoted leads to the following conclusion: Bharata mentions separately, as typical stage-characters, the *sūtradhāra* and his *pāripārśvika*, the *viṭa*, the *śakāra*, the *vidūṣaka* and the *ceṭa* [463]. In two texts, which may be counted among the earliest of this kind of literature, viz. the Kāmasūtra and the

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[460] Similarly Kosegarten, p. 199, lines 8–9 and 25; ed. Benares 1930, p. 141, line 30 and p. 142, line 12. Not found in other recensions.

[461] Bühler-Agashe; cf. Kane, note on p. 198, 9: "his parasites or companions in sensuality". Meyer translates "da der Herrscher ganz von den liederlichen Lebemännern abhängig war".

[462] Tawney-Penzer, Ocean of Stories I, p. 64.

[463] 35.66–80C.=24.91–104 KM (=p. 654, interpolation after 35.20). For the *ceṭa* see 35.80. In the KM. edition he is said to be a *gandhasevaka* (24.104, p. 655, line 17) "using fragrances". He must have been different from the *gāndhika* "seller of perfumes" (n. 424). Ghosh, however, emends to *bandhasevaka* (35.80 C.) "giving service under bondage".

Daśakumāracarita, three already occur in the fixed formula *pīṭhamarda-viṭa-vidūṣaka*. The possible theory that the description of the Nāṭyaśāstra is older than this formula would not account for the fact that Bharata does not mention the *pīṭhamarda*. The early date of the Kāmasūtra, when the triad had already become formulaic, excludes the idea that the *pīṭhamarda* was a late intruder in the drama. It is from the drama that Vātsyāyana must have taken this triad, as it is highly improbable that he has created it himself. The formulaic way in which it is used in the Kāmasūtra and general considerations lead to the conclusion that the triad must be a trace of scholastic reflexion on dramatic art, which has found its way into the handbook on Erotics. Since the *pīṭhamarda* does not occur in the extant dramas (apart from some late attempts at a revival), he must have belonged, like the *genres* Ḍima and Samavakāra to an earlier but almost forgotten stage of development of the Sanskrit drama. If this is true, the formulaic triad must indeed, as has been suggested above, have originated in a dramaturgic school which was different from Bharata's.

As for the *vidūṣaka*, the final conclusion must be that there is nothing to show that he was at any time more than a stage-character.

20. THE NĀYIKĀ AS THE LEADING LADY

In § 12 (p. 171) the tradition about the guardian deities as found in the Nāṭyaśāstra has been discussed. It was shown that this necessarily leads to the conclusion that the *nāyikā* must, at an early stage of development of the Sanskrit drama, have been considered one of the principal parts (*pradhānapātrāṇi*, as Abhinavagupta has it). Just as the *nāyaka* has Indra for his guardian deity, and the *vidūṣaka* the Oṁkāra, so it is Sarasvatī who is the special patroness of the *nāyikā*. Since this is mentioned in the first chapter of the Nāṭyaśāstra, which is characterized by some Vedic reminiscences and which has preserved the oldest traditions about the origin of the drama, it is a reasonable conclusion that the idea of three special guardian deities is a heritage from the same pre-classical period to which some other traditions must be ascribed.

In the preceding study the main stress had to be laid on the ambivalent relation between the *nāyaka* and the *vidūṣaka*, which was shown to reflect a structural antagonism between Indra and Varuṇa. For that purpose the problem of the *nāyikā* could be ignored as being of no direct relevance to this antithetic relation. In the light of the theory of the identity of Indra and *nāyaka*, however, the relation between the *nāyikā* and Sarasvatī must now be considered more closely.

In contrast with the *vidūṣaka* the *nāyikā* has never been considered to be only of secondary importance. Comparatively late dramaturgists such as Sāgaranandin, who no longer recognize the *vidūṣaka* as one of the principal characters, still continue to mention the *nāyikā* along with the *nāyaka* as the leading parts. To some extent this might be explained from her prominent role in some classical nāṭakas and prakaraṇas (Śakuntalā, Vasantasenā, etc.). Since, however, the prototypes of the

nāyaka and the *vidūṣaka* could be found in Vedic mythology, there is some reason to look for a similar mythological prototype of the *nāyikā*. In that case the first thing that comes to mind is the old Vedic pattern of Devas and Asuras both wooing a divine maiden.

From the brāhmaṇas onwards the texts refer to a fixed type of contest between Devas and Asuras with a young goddess at stake. A well-known instance is their strife to win Vāc by calling her to their respective sides (*vi-hvā-*)[464]. Vāc stands in a particularly close relation to Prajāpati, the World-Father, who impersonates both the primeval Oneness and the totality of the dual cosmos. Like Prajāpati himself (ŚB. IV.5.7.2), Vāc thus stands above the duality of the differentiated cosmos[465]. As such she is free to choose according to her own will. In ŚB. III.2.1.18–21 however, the following tale is told: "Now the gods and the Asuras, both of them sprung from Prajāpati, entered upon their father Prajāpati's inheritance: the gods came in for the Mind and the Asuras for Speech ... (19) The gods said to the Sacrifice: "That Vāc is a woman: beckon her, and she will certainly call thee to her" ... He accordingly beckoned her. She, however, at first disdained him from the distance ... (20) ... He beckoned her; but she only replied to him, as it were, by shaking her head ... (21) ... He beckoned her, and she called him to her ... (23) The gods then cut her off from the Asuras ..." (tr. Eggeling).

There is some difference between the two tales in that the first has as its central motif a contest between Devas and Asuras, both wooing Vāc, whereas in the second the gods win her stealthily. What the stories have in common is the fact that the gods owe their success to their psychological insight. In both tales the position of Vāc with regard to the two parties is characterized by her freedom to choose for herself.

For the problem here under discussion it may be of interest that in the brāhmaṇas Vāc is identified with Sarasvatī[466]. In the Mahābhārata, where Vāc but seldom occurs as a goddess[467], Sarasvatī has taken over

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[464] See MS. III.7.3 (78,3), KS. XXIV.1 (90,10), KKS. XXXVII.2 (195.20-228,4), TS. VI.1.6.6, ŚB. III.2.4.4–6 (Devas and Gandharvas).

[465] For Vāc's relation to Prajāpati cf. KS. XII.5 (167,15), XXVII.1 (137.8), KKS. XLII.1 (246.2/287,2) *Prajāpatir vā idam āsīt, tasya vāg dvitīyā 'sīt, tāṁ mithunaṁ samabhavat ...*, PB. XX.14.2 *Prajāpatir vā idam eka āsīt, tasya vāg eva svam āsīt, vāg dvitīyā*, ŚB. VI.1.1.9 *vâg evâ 'sya*. Different ideas, according to which Vāc is secondary to mind, in ŚB. VIII.1.2.8 (cf. VS. 13.58 *iyám upári matís, tásyai vấṁ mātyâ*), X.5.3.4. In III.2.1.18, however, Vāc is on a par with Manas (mind). Cf. J. Muir, Original Sanskrit Texts V, p. 392.

[466] Cf. MS. II.3.9 (37,4), III.6.4 (64,1), KS. XII.10 (173,6), XXIII.2 (75,3), KKS. XXXV. 8 (184,12/214,21), TS. VII.2.7.4–5, ŚB. III.1.4.9 and 14, III.9.1.7, V.2.2.13, V.3.4.25, IX.3.4.17, XIII.1.8.5, XIV.2.1.15 *vâg vai Sárasvatī*, ŚB. VII.5.1.31, XI.2.4.9 *máno vai Sárasvān, vấk Sárasvatī*, AB. III.1.10 *vāk tu Sarasvatī*, III.2.10 *vāg ghi Sarasvatī*. Cf. Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 338 n. 1.

[467] See, e.g., XII.224.55 [=233 (232).25 Bomb. ed.] *anādinidhanā nityā vāg utsṛṣṭā Svayaṁbhuvā* (Nīlakaṇṭha: *vedamayī divyā*) and XII.231.8, where there is an identification: *jihvāyāṁ vāk Sarasvatī*. Similarly XII.306.6 *Sarasvatīha vāg bhūtā śarīraṁ te pravekṣyati* and XIV.21.13 *tasmād ucchvāsam āsādya na vakṣyasi Sarasvati*: (15) *tasmād ucchvāsam āsādya na vāg vadati karhi cit*.

her function. She here bears the title "Mother of the Vedas" [468], and she is incidentally said to be the daughter of the All-god Brahmā, who corresponds to the Vedic Prajāpati [469].

In the light of these facts it is possible that Sarasvatī as the patroness of the *nāyikā* is historically related to Vāc of the brāhmaṇas [470]. In any case, if the interpretation of the *nāyaka* and the *vidūṣaka* in terms of Vedic mythology is correct, only a contest between Devas and Asuras can account for the importance that was apparently attached to the part of the *nāyikā*. If this is true, however, the fact has to be considered that the same pattern is in later literature also found with respect to another goddess, who is much more prominent, viz. Śrī.

In the brāhmaṇas Śrī is said to be a daughter of Prajāpati [471]. As such she holds the same intermediate position, between and above the two parties, that is characteristic of Vāc. This mythological trait of hers has particularly been elaborated in the Mahābhārata. Gösta Johnsen, who has given a good account of the material in IIJ. 9 (1966), p. 252ff., rightly stresses the importance of the underlying pattern. He points out [472] that "Śrī is not without a will of her own. It is she herself who decides to leave the Asura and go to Indra. She states that nobody knows her, neither Devas, nor Asuras. Nobody can be sure of possessing her". The fickleness of the divine Rājaśrī, the impersonation of a king's good fortune, who may abandon him at any moment to support his adversary, is a well-known motif of classical poetry [473]. It need hardly be added that, side by side with this deified Fortuna, the word *śrī* could express a more impersonal power, as in Mhbh. II.17.16 *eṣa śriyaṁ samuditāṁ sarvarājñāṁ grahīṣyati.*

One of the most interesting instances of this role of Śrī occurs in the tale of the Churning of the Ocean, in the course of which the Devas win Śrī by churning the cosmic waters [474]. The Amṛtamanthana is a classical instance of the cosmogonical contest between Devas and Asuras. Since, according to the Indian tradition (p. 195), it was also the subject-matter of the first dramatic performance, it is possible that Śrī's part in this drama was important. In that case she would have been the prototype

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[468] XII.326.52 *Śriyaṁ Lakṣmīṁ ca kīrtiṁ ca pṛthivīṁ ca kakudminīm, vedānāṁ mātaraṁ paśya matsthāṁ devīṁ Sarasvatīm.* Cf. Harivaṁśa II.120.15 (=10244= App. I.35.29) *vedānāṁ mātaraṁ caiva Sāvitrīṁ bhaktavatsalām.*

[469] See XII.330.10 *ṛtā brahmasutā sā me satyā devī Sarasvatī* and cf. XII.121.23 *yathoktā brahmakanye 'ti Lakṣmīr nītiḥ Sarasvatī.*

[470] It is not quite clear what exactly M. M. Ghosh had in mind when in his note on NŚ. 1.96 (Translation² p. 13 note) he wrote that with Sarasvatī the Vedic goddess of that name was meant.

[471] ŚB. XI.4.3.1 *Prajāpatir vai prajāḥ sṛjámāno 'tapyata. tásmāc chrāntāt tepānāc chrīr úd akrāmat.*

[472] Op. c., p. 254, where he refers to Mhbh. XII.218.7f.

[473] Cf. e.g., Mudrārākṣasa II.12, Daśak. p. 15,7 Agashe (and p. 4, 19). See also Gonda, Aspects of early Viṣṇuism, p. 189. In Beiträge zur Geschichte der Göttin Lakṣmī by Gerda Hartmann (doctor's thesis, Kiel 1933), p. 33, there is only a casual reference to Lakṣmī's function as "Orts- und Stadtgottheit".

[474] See n. 482.

of the pre-classical *nāyikā*, the last reminiscence of whom is still preserved in the Nāṭyaśāstra. Apart from this conjecture it may be pointed out that Śrī's emerging from the primeval waters is mythologically equivalent to her being sprung from Prajāpati. Originating in the undifferentiated world she stands above the duality of the two opposed parties. Her fickleness as a woman (as the Indian poets saw it) is, indeed, deeply rooted in mythological notions about the undifferentiated primordial world.

In Mhbh. II.61.58ff. Vidura tells an old story of a dispute between the Daitya Virocana and the brahmin of Angiras' race Sudhanvan about a maiden (v. 59 *kanyāhetoḥ*). In this contest Johnsen (p. 252) has recognized an instance of epic dualism [475]. In V.35.5 this *saṁvāda* is said to have been about Keśinī (*keśinyarthe*). From another passage, which relates how a fight arose between the Deva Indra and the Asura Bali [476] Johnsen rightly infers that the *kanyā* and Keśinī are identical with (or should we perhaps rather say: mythologically equivalent to?) Śrī [477].

It seems to me that Johnsen has brought to light an important mythical pattern, which may be interpreted as follows: The Devas and Asuras were fighting about Śrī [478] but since the divine maiden, born of the all-encompassing totality, stood above the duality of the phenomenal world, neither party could "know" her (XII.218.7), as she by her very nature transcended them both. She was, indeed, free to choose her partner among the Devas as well as the Asuras. In the story told in the Harivaṁśa Bali vanquishes Indra (by using his *vāruṇāstra* "Varuṇic arrow", which is mightier than Indra's! III.64.20 = 14005 = App. I, 42B, 2401) and Śrī comes to him because of his *sattva* (III.65.9ff. = 14029ff. = App. I, 42B, 2445f.).

In the light of these facts it may not be surprising that the tradition preserved in NŚ. 1.96, which, for several reasons, is probably the last reminiscence of the oldest form of the Sanskrit drama, classes the *nāyikā* among the three principal parts. It must be admitted, however, that of the old pattern that has been reconstructed here no trace can be found in the classical drama. The most important lesson, however, which can be learnt from an attentive study of the first chapters of the Nāṭyaśāstra is that it would be a fallacy to think that a prehistoric stage of the drama can be reconstructed from the classical *nāṭaka*. In the latter the *nāyaka* need not compete with an adversary to win the young girl, who is mostly already enamoured of the hero from the first moment she has seen him. If we look back at the older obsolete forms of drama, for which we have to rely entirely on the brief definitions of the theorists, there is in the Īhāmṛga actually a competition between a divine *nāyaka* and a *pratināyaka*,

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[475] See also above, p. 20.

[476] See Mhbh. XII.218 and cf. Harivaṁśa III.64.13ff. (= 13998ff. = App. I, 42B. 2363).

[477] In Mhbh. XII.218.7–8 Śrī says *na mā Virocano veda na mā Vairocano Balī . . . tvaṁ māṁ Śakra na jānīṣe sarve devā na māṁ viduḥ*. See p. 51 n. 164!

[478] Mhbh. XII.34.13b *idaṁ ca śrūyate Pārtha yuddhe devāsure purā, Asurā bhrātaro jyeṣṭhā devāś cāpi yavīyasaḥ* (14) *teṣām api Śrīnimittaṁ mahān āsīt samucchrayaḥ, yuddhaṁ varṣasahasrāṇi dvātriṁśad abhavat kila.*

both well-known from tradition but the latter being an evil-doer (*ayuktakṛt*) by inadvertence. Although the Daśarūpaka defines the Īhāmṛga as "a contest about a woman" [479] the attempt on the part of the *pratināyaka* to win her by violence [480] must have excluded a free choice of the "divine maiden". She must, therefore, have been more an object of the dramatic action than a leading part.

Thus, looking for a kind of drama with a prominent *nāyikā*, we are again led back to the legendary *samavakāra*, to which type the mythical first drama, the Churning of the Ocean, is said to have belonged. The number of *nāyakas* prescribed for this kind amounts, it is true, to as many as twelve (see above p. 196f.). This implies that there was a contest between two parties instead of two protagonists, but each of the parties got its profit from the strife. As we have seen, Dhanika in his commentary on the Daśarūpaka adds the explanation "Just as in the Churning of the Ocean Vāsudeva etc. win Lakṣmī etc." [481]. Here, indeed, the pattern is found in which the presupposed prototype of the *nāyikā* could take an active part in the action. After appearing at the surface of the Milk-ocean Śrī chooses of her own free will the Devas [482].

In conclusion it may be useful to summarize briefly the preceding discussion and to state which inferences would seem justified on the basis of the scarce data at our disposal. It is obvious that no well-founded history of the development of the *nāyikā* can be reconstructed. Particular reference can only be made to the following details. According to Indian tradition the oldest drama had the Churning of the Ocean for its subject and was a *samavakāra*. A *samavakāra* is defined by the dramaturgists as a contest for a woman and Dhanika illustrates it by referring to Vāsudeva's winning of Lakṣmī. It has generally been inferred that this definition merely describes a single specimen of this *genre*, a *Samudramanthana*, which had been preserved and which must still have been known at the time when the definition of the Nāṭyaśāstra was made. From the old mythological pattern it may be inferred that in such a play Śrī/Lakṣmī must have played a prominent part because she had an independent position with respect to the two parties. It remains dubious to what extent we may rely on Dhanika's words "the winning of Lakṣmī, etc." (*Lakṣmyādilābhaḥ*) in assuming such a part of a *nāyikā* in a play for which the theory only prescribes twelve male heroes. Structurally there was a similarity and parallelism between Śrī of the epic and the Vedic

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[479] 3.76 *strīhetur iha saṁgaraḥ*, SD. 6.250 *divyastrīhetukaṁ yuddham*. Cf. NŚ. 20.78 *divyastrīkāraṇopagatayuddhaḥ*. Note v. 81 *kevalam amarastriyo hy asmin*.

[480] DR. 3.74, SD. 6.247 *divyastriyam anicchantīm apahārādine 'cchataḥ*.

[481] ad DR. 3.64: *yathā samudramanthane Vāsudevādīnāṁ Lakṣmy-ādilābhaḥ*.

[482] Mhbh. I.16.33f., Matsyapurāṇa 250.2–4: *prasannabhāḥ* (*prasannābhaḥ* MP) *samutpannaḥ Somaḥ śītāṁśur ujjvalaḥ* (34) *Śrīr anantaram utpannā ghṛtāt pāṇḍuravāsinī, Surā devī samutpannā turagaḥ pāṇḍuras tathā . . .* (36) *Śrīḥ Surā caiva Somaś ca turagaś ca manojavaḥ, yato devās tato jagmur ādityapatham āśritāḥ*. The Matsyapurāṇa has only vv. 1–4 in common with the Mahābhārata. See also Bhāgavatapurāṇa VIII.8.8.

Vāc/Sarasvatī. In what way the latter goddess has become the patroness of the *nāyikā* can no longer be determined. The only thing that can be said is that the part of the pre-classical *nāyikā* as reconstructed here would have fitted in very well with the general pattern which it has been the object of this study to disclose, that is, the interplay of the two principal male characters of the Sanskrit drama.

ADDENDA

Ad p. 125: According to Kāmasūtra 6.1.12 the *nāyaka* likes dramatic performances *(prekṣaṇaka)* very much, but the "shows" or "spectacles" *(prekṣā)*, mentioned as diversions along with cock-fighting and gambling (1.4.25, cf. 1.4.8 and 6.1.25 *prekṣaṇaka*) need not refer to dramas. The commentary (13th cent.) explains *sajīva-nirjīvair naṭādiprekṣābhiḥ*, cf. also ad 6.1.25). As for the 31st of the 64 *kalās*, viz. *nāṭakākhyāyikādarśanam* (1.3.15), it apparently means "knowledge of dramas and short stories" (*parijñānam* comm.). Of greater interest are the plays *(prekṣaṇaka)* which the *nāyaka*, who here acts as the head of the *nāgarakas*, organizes, as part of a procession *(ghaṭā)*, in the temple of Sarasvatī (1.4.14–18). Every month or fortnight he commissions some *nāgarakas* to perform the *pūjā* (which must primarily have been worship of the goddess on whose special day the festival takes place) and instructs the actors. Foreign actors are tested on this occasion. The day after the performance the *nāgarakas* offer *pūjā* to the actors (cf. above, p. 169) and pay them the amount due. Even though this description may be an idealized and systematized picture of actual life, it shows that performances, sponsored by rich citizens, did take place, on the occasion of religious festivals which were also social events, but in temples instead of theatres.

Ad p. 208: According to Yaśodhara (13th cent.) on Kāmasūtra 1.4.33 the *vidūṣaka* reviled the *nāgaraka* or the courtezan when they were over-bold, which he apparently states in explanation of the term *vidūṣaka: sa ca veśyāṁ nāgarakaṁ vā kvacit pramādyantaṁ labdhapraṇayatvād apavadate, iti vidūṣakaḥ.*

CORRIGENDA

p. 35, line 1 from the bottom, *Add:* Cf. ChUp. VIII.7.8.
p. 38, line 1 read: verse 5ab.
p. 52, n. 167: delete JB.I.283.
p. 87 n. 328, p. 88 n. 333: read: N. J. Shende.
p. 87, n. 330 (line 2): delete *yad.*
p. 194, n. 326: Sāgaranandin, NLRK 806 quotes NŚ. 21.90.

The scarce secondary literature on the Sādhyas that I know contains remarkably little information of any value. Most handbooks simply ignore them. See Weber, Ind. Stud. IX., p. 6 n. 2, Muir, Original Sanskrit Texts I, p. 10, V, p. 10ff., p. 17 n. 26, Bergaigne II, p. 76, III, p. 75, Sieg, Die Sagenstoffe des Ṛgveda, p. 15, K. Rönnow, Trita Āptya I, pp. 37f., 105f., Hillebrandt, Ved. Myth. II², p. 407 n. 2 ("deifizierte Vorfahren"), Geldner note ad RS. I.164.50, Renou, EVP. 16, p. 149, Hopkins, Epic Myth., p. 175, Monier-Williams, Skt. Engl. Dict. The problem was correctly stated by Roth (see Whitney's translation of AS. VII.5.1). See also, in general, on the problem of the generations of the gods Muir, OST. V, p. 16ff., Macdonell, Ved. Myth., p. 17. By far the best survey of the data has been given by S. Lévi, Doctrine du sacrifice, p. 62f. The basic facts would seem to be the following:

1) They *were* on earth before the Devas, but are also consistently called Devas. Cf. KS. XXIII.8 (83,12), XXVI.7 (129,19), KKS. [XXXVI.6 ex conjectura], XLI.5 (240,3/279,7) *Sādhyā vai nāma devā āsan pūrve devebhyaḥ (teṣāṁ na kiṁ cana svam āsīt, te 'gniṁ mathitvā 'gnau juhvata āsata)*, PB. XXV.8.2 *Sādhyā vai nāma devebhyo devāḥ pūrva āsan*, VIII.3.5, 4.1, 4.9 *Sādhyā vai nāma devā āsan*, MS. III.9.5 (121,1) *Sādhyá vaí devá āsann, átha vaí tárhi ná 'nyá 'hutir āsīt* (cf. III.7.9, 10; 9.4.5), TS. VI.3.5.1 *Sādhyá vaí devá asmíṁ loká āsan, ná 'nyát kíṁ caná miṣát*. The Rigvedic poets refer to them as *pū́rve devā́ḥ* "former gods", see VII.21.7, X.109.4 (cf. 90.7), I.164.50. Cf. perhaps also AS. XI.8(10).10: ten gods *devébhyaḥ purá* ("before the gods"?). It should be noted in this connection that the statement found in some modern surveys that the Sādhyas were older than the Ādityas is open to doubt. In the Yajurvedic version of the Mārtāṇḍa myth (see Karl Hoffmann, MSS. 11, p. 85ff.) only the Taittirīyas have the detail that Aditi cooked the *brahmaudanam* for the Sādhyas, who then must have existed in the primordial world even before the Ādityas were born (TS. VI.5.6.1ff., TB. I.1.9.1ff.). The other versions do not mention the Sādhyas, cf. MS. I.6.12 (104,10), KS. VII.15 (78,15)=GB. I.2.15, KS. XI.6 (151,5), ŚB. III.1.3.3–4. This detail is, therefore, most likely a later addition, but even if the Sādhyas did not exist in the primordial world and if they were not originally Asuras (which is, indeed, never suggested in the texts), the fact remains that the later gods were *avare* "younger, posterior" in respect to the Sādhyas. Cf. KS. XXIII.8 (83,13).

2) They were the first to go to heaven, where they are now. Cf. KS. PB. *svargaṁl lokam āyan* and RS. I.164.50, X.90.16 *yajñéna yajñám ayajanta devā́s tā́ni dhármāṇi prathamā́ny āsan, té ha nā́kam mahimā́naḥ sacanta yátra pū́rve Sādhyā́ḥ sánti devā́ḥ*. Somehow, accordingly, they must have

been present as Devas at the moment when the dual cosmos was created. Nowhere is it said where they came from (but see Mhbh. I.1.33).

3) That they were no ordinary Devas is shown by the fact that they sometimes stand in clear opposition to the latter, e.g., when the Sādhyas, going to heaven, try to prevent the Devas from following them (KS. XXIII.8: 83,13, a gap in KKS. XXXVI.5, not in MS. III.7.1), just as the gods try to prevent men (TS. VI.3.4.7); or when, going to heaven, they take the sacrifice and Soma with them (PB. VIII.4.1).

4) That this opposition had a structural character is shown by AS. VII.79.2cd, where the goddess of the New Moon says: "In me all the gods of the two parties, both the Sādhyas and those who recognize Indra as their leader, came together "(*máyi devā́ ubháye Sādhyā́ś cé 'ndrajyeṣṭhā́ḥ sámagacchanta sárve*). For the "non-technical" use of *sárve* see p. 57, n. 190 and Renou, EVP. 4, p. 3. The word *ubháye* points to a binary opposition (see pp. 8 and 44 on *ubháye prājāpatyā́ḥ*). This seems to rule out the possibility of the Sādhyas standing for the Ādityas and Aṅgirasas, as is suggested by Sāyaṇa ad RS. I.164.50 (cf. AB. I.16.36–39).

5) In the system of classification the Sādhyas always belong to the centre, specifically, it seems, to the zenith. Cf. ṢB. IV.4.9 *pitaraś cā 'dharāyāṁ, Sādhyāś co 'rdhvāyām*, VādhS. (Acta Or. 6, p. 130) *Aṅgiraso 'dhastāt, Sādhyā upariṣṭāt*, cf. ChUp. III.10.1, etc. Only conjointly with the Āptyas, it seems, are they located in the nadir. Cf. JB. II.142 *Viśve Devā upariṣṭāt, Sādhyāś cā 'ptyāś cā 'dhastāt*. As for AB. VIII.14.3 *asyāṁ dhruvāyām madhyamāyām pratiṣṭhāyāṁ diśi Sādhyāś cā 'ptyāś ca devāḥ* the *dhruvā diś* is here contrasted with the zenith (*ūrdhvā diś*). Therefore the possibility should be considered, that it is not the centre in general that is meant here but more specifically the nadir – a possibility which Gonda, Viṣṇuism and Śivaism, p. 17, too rashly denies. Cf. also the commentary ad AS. III.27.5 *dhruvā dík: adhodik.*

6) The Sādhyas seem to have also been associated with the idea of transcendence and, after they have gone to heaven, with what is *beyond* the top of the world axis. A *yūpa* which is thirteen cubits long is of the same measure as the Sādhyas (KS. XXVI.4: 126,13), the thirteen months of the year (ŚB. III.6.4.24) or Prajāpati (MS. III.9.2: 115,7). This number characterizes the Sādhyas as a manifestation of the totality (12+1). To the Sādhyas belongs the uppermost part of the sacrificial stake (*yūpa*), viz. that part which, one finger-joint long, protrudes above the top-ring (*caṣāla*). Cf. KS. XXVI.4 (126,20) *yāvad uttamam aṅgulikāṇḍaṁ tāvad atirecayed, yajñaparuṣā saṁmitam* (otherwise MS. III.9.4: 119,4 *aṅguli-mātráṁ kāryàm*). Cf. "What is superabundant of the sacrifice, that remains for the Sādhya gods. Superabundant of the sacrifice is that which is superabundant of the sacrificial stake" (KS. XXVI.4: 127,1), "The Sādhya gods despised the sacrifice. To them, verily, belongs that which is made superabundant during the sacrifice. Superabundant during the sacrifice is what fire they sacrifice in fire. That (part) of the sacrificial stake which

protrudes above the *caṣāla*, that *touches* (*spṛśati*) them" (MS. III.7.9: 89,6). This idea of *atirikta* "superabundant" also explains why in JB. I.283 the Sādhyas and Āptyas (with whom the Sādhyas in this text always form one group, the sixth and last after Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Viśve Devāḥ and Maruts) are associated with the metre *aticchandas* (I.283) and *pārameṣṭhyāya* (II.25, III.152). The notion of *atirikta* is closely connected with that of *áparimita* in the Brāhmaṇas. While most texts (KS. XXVI.6: 129,6, KKS. XLI.4: 239,5/278,15, TS. VI.3.4.7, cf. ŚB. III.7.1.25, ṢB. IV.4.16) content themselves with the simple statement *Índrasya caṣālaṁ, Sādhyānām átiriktam*, the MS. III.9.4 (119,3) has the additional detail of the Sādhyas despising the sacrifice: *Índrasya caṣālaṁ, yé vaí devā́ḥ Sādhyá yajñám atyámanyanta téṣāṁ vā́ etád yád upáriṣṭāc caṣālasyā 'ṅgulimātráṁ kāryàm*. This *motif* apparently only serves to explain why nothing but the "superabundant" (*átirikta*) of the sacrifice is allotted to them. Similarly TS. VI.3.4 8.

7) The only conclusion that can be drawn from the data is that the Sādhyas, unlike the Ādityas, were not originally Asuras who had gone over to the party of the Devas. They were Devas in their own right and were somehow "here", when the other (later) Devas conquered the Asuras, their most significant feat being that they were the first sacrificers. When there was nothing else to offer but Agni, they offered Agni (KS. XXVI.7: 129,19) and so ascended to heaven. It is understandable that Sylvain Lévi, p. 63, thought that they had been ousted and obliterated by the Ādityas but their place in the pantheon is so entirely different from that of the Ādityas that the latter can hardly have affected the position of the Sādhyas. Rönnow's attempts to explain "former gods" in terms of cult changes are hardly correct, because here, as in the other cases, "former" is more likely to be a mythological than a historical notion. No well-founded interpretation can be proposed but this note may be helpful to state the problem.

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